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FIRST THINGS

May 1991
Number 13

A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life

Religion in the Unheavenly City
Roger Starr

Godly Cooking: The Ethics of Technology
Max L. Stackhouse

The Decline and Fall of the Christian College (II)
James Tunstead Burtchaell

Pacifism, Just War & the Gulf: An Exchange
Stanley Hauerwas / Richard John Neuhaus

Also: Robert Royal on "1492 and All That" • Christian Mission and the Third Millennium • For Educational Retrenchment Boys, Girls, and Date Rape

Reviews and Opinion: Mark R. Schwehn on Alasdair MacIntyre Peter J. Leithart • Franky Schaeffer • Joseph E. Davis R. Laurence Moore • Matthew Berke

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The Public Square
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FIRST THINGS

A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life

MAY 1991 • NUMBER 13

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Right On about Gulf War

George Weigel's "The Churches & War in the Gulf" (March) was splendid. It is quite simply the best exposition of the subject I have yet seen. My congratulations.

Charles Krauthammer
Washington, D.C.

Hook in Heaven?

I very much appreciated Michael Novak's beautiful tribute to Jacques Maritain in the December 1990 issue. Maritain has also had a strong influence on my own thinking.

It is because I so appreciated this article that I was disturbed that Novak coupled Maritain with Sidney Hook. It diminished the reverence due Maritain, and it gave Hook a reverence he simply does not deserve—in death or in life. Even if Sidney Hook seemed to express some sense of transcendence at the very end of his life, the fact is that throughout his long and active career he epitomized the atheistic philosopher.

One can certainly admire Sidney Hook for his moral and political courage and wisdom, but putting him in heaven along with a soul like Jacques Maritain is a bit too much. I think this is a case where my friend Michael Novak's neoconservatism has gotten the better of his Catholicism.

Among some more secular neoconservatives there is now a tendency to "canonize" Sidney Hook. Perhaps he is as close to a "saint" as they can recognize. But Michael Novak's Catholic faith should better prepare him to make a much sharper distinction between a good man and a holy one.

David Novak
Department of Religious Studies
University of Virginia

Michael Novak replies:

I have such great respect for David Novak that it pains me to disagree with him on a serious point.

By no means would I pass judgment on Sidney Hook's standing as a member of the Jewish community of faith. However, in a purely philosophical sense, my judgment of Sidney Hook goes back to my graduate-school days at Harvard, when I was preparing to write *Belief and Unbelief* (1965). I judged him then to be that sort of serious unbeliever—faithful to honesty, courage, and the community of inquiry concerning God—who shares much in common with the serious believer who works in darkness. From his writings, I did conclude that on religion, Sidney was somewhat tone-deaf; all of us have some weak spots in our perceptive apparatus. But at the same time he took religion to be a serious question and considered critically the writings of most of his major contemporaries in the field of religious thought—Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, Jacques Maritain, John Courtney Murray, and others. He did not always understand their arguments, but he did not ridicule them; and he sometimes gave the impression that he wished they could do better. When he encountered truly flabby or cloudy arguments, he indicated that they were unworthy of the tradition and suggested ways to improve them. . . .

Although I met Sidney Hook in person only once or twice, I always felt a sympathetic bond between us on this issue, and I had a chance to speak with him about it not long before he died. I told him that I abhorred terminological imperialism and did not intend to impose an unwanted definition upon him; nonetheless, I could not help judging that in his own writings he displayed many of the intellectual activities that for me count as evidence of the presence of God. You are determined to think of yourself as an unbeliever, I said, and I respect that; but you must also respect my report about what you are doing, seen from within my own horizon. Many times you act intellectually as a believer acts; but you do not see the full implications of what you are doing.

He allowed that that might be how

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I saw matters, but with a characteristic twinkle in his eye, he said he had always thought of himself as an unbeliever, and it was too late to change. He was obviously quite pleased by my words, however.

In a number of passages, Hook reports passing judgment on himself as if from God's perspective, having hope of a sort stronger than he could quite account for and experiencing within himself a surge of creativity of the sort a believer might point to. He always resisted the temptation to accept these evidences as a believer would . . . but he did not destroy the record of these experiences in himself. On the contrary, he recorded them quite faithfully. I deeply admired this quality in him.

A Misreading?

As a subscriber to First Things and the author of *Christianity Today*'s November 19, 1990 cover story, "Brave New Harvest," I feel I must respond to Richard John Neuhaus' critique of my article in the February 1991 First Things ("The Courage to Say No," The Public Square).

Mr. Neuhaus' criticisms of the article fall into two categories: one, he believes the article was ethically muddleheaded, not being sufficiently prolife. Two, he believes the article was intellectually deficient, not being sufficiently researched.

As to the article's ethical deficiencies, he says that "the gist of the article is that harvesting for laboratory experiments can be clearly separated from the rightness or wrongness of abortion." I am surprised at such an unfortunate misreading. It's clear that Mr. Neuhaus failed to see that I was attempting to fairly represent both sides of a controversial ethical issue—not endorsing fetal-cell research. . . . Is Mr. Neuhaus opposed to Christians hearing both sides of an issue so that they can intelligently respond?

Moreover, I carefully pointed out that ethicists on this issue can basically be divided into two camps: those that view aborted fetuses as *cadavers* of a medical procedure and think that some good should come from abortions, and those that view aborted fetuses as *victims* of oppression, sin, and thoughtlessness, and therefore think that these victims should not be further exploited—especially under the guise of a "good cause." I concluded the analysis of these two camps with a quote from Dr. Vernon Grounds, president of Evangelicals for Social Action: "[The question of whether we should use aborted fetuses for this kind of research] comes back to 'Shall we do evil that good may come?' " (quoting Paul from Romans 3:8). The answer to Paul's rhetorical question is obvious, though it seems to have been lost on Mr. Neuhaus—just as the allusion of the article's title was lost on him.

Next, Neuhaus says that "critical to the reasoning in *Christianity Today* is the fact that good Christians are engaged in such experiments and *they* do not think that they are doing anything morally questionable." He is correct that they don't think they are doing anything immoral; it is a *non sequitur*, however, to conclude that my mere reporting of this fact is an endorsement of such immorality or "critical" to my analysis. It is neither.

Neuhaus asks why Christians shouldn't just say "no" to diabetics and Parkinson's sufferers who are considering a fetal-cell implant to improve their condition. The one-word answer is: compassion. As I said in my article, the church must call the idolatry of technology idolatry; the church must try to influence the researchers in this area; the church must not embrace the motto of Romans 3:8. However, in saying "no" to these people, Christians must also weep with those who weep and share in the suffering of these people. I'm at a loss as to why Neuhaus faults this.

His second criticism is that the article was insufficiently researched. First of all, *Christianity Today* is a popular magazine for intelligent readers, not a scholarly journal for professional researchers. . . . Second, the fact that I failed to consult the Vatican's statements on the subject is hollow criticism, given that the Vatican's position on these kinds of issues is hardly any great secret. Third, the ethicists I consulted and quoted in the article are national experts on the issue—it's not as if there is some key piece of information out there that the article overlooked.

While I'm pleased that Mr. Neuhaus read the article, I'm also disappointed that he felt compelled for some reason to turn it into a straw man.

Andrew Simons
Denver, CO

Jewish Knowledge of Christianity

Fr. John Pawlikowski questions why Jews are so ignorant of Christianity when mutual understanding is such a critical element of continuing Christian-Jewish Dialogue ("Challenging Jewish Attitudes," The Public Square, February). Various explanations are offered in the article to explain the resistance of Jewish educators to teaching more courses on Christianity in religious schools—the hostility born of victimization, fear of opening Jewish children to proselytizing, and "monism" in Jewish thinking.

I would offer another possibility—Fr. Pawlikowski is wrong. The fact is, Jews know an enormous amount about Christianity by virtue of living in a Christian milieu. I would argue that most Jews actually know as much or more about Christianity than they do about their own faith. I have personally observed a hundred Jewish teenagers, most of whom could name the parents of Jesus, none of whom could name the parents of Moses. Arthur Hertzberg tells of a gathering of rabbis' wives where more could say something intelligent about Aquinas than they could about Maimonides. Most college-educated Jews in America can offer a passable definition of Original Sin, but how many can explain the Jewish concept of the Merit of the Fathers?

This inequity is hardly surprising given the exposure to Christian concepts, symbols, and motifs that Jews experience every day in American art,

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literature, and public life. If there is a failure, it is a failure of Jewish religious education. . . . I as a Jewish educator am profoundly reluctant to give up even more of my limited time with students to teach the fundamentals of other people's religion. I hope that my Christian counterparts will understand what I am saying without thinking I am in any way slighting Christianity or the value of interfaith dialogue.

Geoffrey W. Dennis
Albuquerque, NM

Richard John Neuhaus wants to know (by his approving citation of Father John T. Pawlikowski) why Christians are "obliged to learn about Judaism while Jews remain largely ignorant of Christianity."

Fr. Pawlikowski gives three "explanations": Christian persecution, Jewish lack of emphasis on theology, and Jewish fear of proselytizing—the third introduced as "finally." First of all, there are more than three explanations; second, the "explanations," especially the first, need to be expressed with rather more vividness to convey their power as explanations. And third, the recourse to explanations based merely on Jews' fears and shortcomings is revealing. It betrays Neuhaus' and Pawlikowski's inability to conceive that there are *reasons*, and not just *explanations*, for Jews' ignorance of Christianity. They say, "Jews cannot continue critiquing the churches' theological approach to Judaism without an equal opportunity for Christians to do the same with a Jewish statement." They do not see that there are Jewish *reasons* because they do not recognize that the relationship is not symmetrical.

Christians are obliged by their own tenets to have a theological approach to Judaism, and Jews have every right to critique it: all too often Jews feel the consequences of Christians' "understanding" of Judaism in their skins. Jews, on the other hand, are not obliged (to put it mildly) to have a theological approach to Christianity. If a Jew thinks Jesus is God, he should become a Christian. A Jew may have an interest in christology from a number of standpoints—sociological, historical, anthropological, or prudential—but not theological. If Christians want to critique such understandings, nothing can stop them—but I shouldn't think it would be of much interest to a Christian.

For the right to critique Christian theological understandings of Judaism there is not a reciprocal obligation for Jews to give Christians an "equal opportunity." Still, if he wants one, here is one Jew's understanding of Christianity for Fr. Pawlikowski: it has two bases, Christ and Torah. We reject the first, and we're not interested in the "faith traditions" of people who think the Torah is the "old testament." I suggest that the less Jews are required to "articulate their understanding of Christianity," the better we'll get along.

This is not to suggest the futility of any dialogue, only that its subject not be theology. The notion that Christianity is "Judaism for the Gentiles" is condescending to Christians and should be rejected. An honest Christian should try to convert the Jews. Jews have never understood (to their credit) why indeed we cannot enjoy religious pluralism—why, that is, we cannot be respectful adversaries without resort to the rack and the stake. When the Messiah comes, we will see who is right, and our differences will be reconciled.

In the meanwhile, we confront a world that is inimical to both of us. Why, throughout history, have we not made common cause against Moloch? The orthodox of both faiths have no difference which necessarily impedes their alliance against pagan and secular evil. Here is a field quite large enough where mutual understanding is both necessary and possible.

Michael W. Gold
Richmond, VA

Afrikaner Theology

I continue to enjoy FIRST THINGS tremendously. I wish, however, to clear up a small point in Dean C. Curry's article "Religion and the New South Africa" (October 1990). While I can affirm, as a politically active evangelical, the basic drift of Curry's argument, I must point out that it is inaccurate to suggest that the neo-Calvinism of Abraham Kuyper is responsible for the development of apartheid theology. It is true that Kuyper's theology was briefly popular among Afrikaner theologians . . . and that some of these theologians used terms borrowed from neo-Calvinism to justify apartheid. This does not as yet establish a causal link. At least in the last thirty years, neo-Calvinists have been among the most outspoken and principled Afrikaner opponents of apartheid. A friend of mine, Jan Lubbe, is doing research . . . to establish exactly the link between the thought of Kuyper and the emergence of apartheid theology. For the time being, however, the jury is not in on this issue. I believe, personally, that we must seek the roots of apartheid theology rather in the pietist withdrawal of reformed theology from the public sphere under the influence of Andrew Murray and others, and in the influence of German theologians and philosophers on Afrikaner students . . . during the 1930s.

There is much in neo-Calvinism as it has been developed by Kuyper, Herman Dooyeweerd, and some of their followers that recommends it to Christian intellectuals interested in the theory of democratic capitalism and mediating structures. The theory of sphere sovereignty is an admirable tool with which to understand the interaction among various societal relationships, such as the state and the economy, or the church and the family. The writings of "left reformationalists" in recent decades may have obscured the utility of this theory but has certainly not robbed it of its hermeneutic power.

Gideon Strauss
Bloemfontein, South Africa

Cults and Religious Freedom

I am writing to you as the President of the American Family Foundation,

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an organization of professionals, including religious leaders, mental health professionals, academicians, and attorneys who are committed to inform the public about the dangers of destructive cults. . . .

In your November 1990 issue ("The Anti-Cult Business," The Public Square), you imply that the American Family Foundation is "bad for religion and bad for the public order" as well as a potential contributor to "prejudice, fanaticism, and hysteria." These are very serious charges, and I would have thought that contact with our group would have been appropriate before making such accusations. . . .

Since your article addresses legal matters, I would like to respond as an attorney with more than thirty years experience and a commitment—untarnished by pecuniary baggage—to the First Amendment and the preservation of individual liberty and our pluralistic society.

Concern about the risk of entanglement of secular courts in the business of regulating religious beliefs and practices, insofar as it relates to tort liability on the part of destructive cults, is misplaced. A like argument was urged and rejected generations ago, when actions based on religious beliefs and practices resulted in the deaths of children who were denied blood transfusions and other medical treatment and in the physical abuse of women and children. Concern about potential peril resulting from involvement of the courts in religion did not prevent every state in this country from rejecting the claimed denial of responsibility for injuries inflicted in hospitals operated by religious organizations. Rejection of the simplistic notion that adults are unqualifiedly responsible for all decisions they make was at the heart of those determinations, which held purported practitioners of religion liable for selling credulous members of the public snake oil to cure illness and goat glands to enhance virility.

Reaffirmation of the doctrine that religious motivation does not override substantial secular concerns relating to health and welfare was recently evidenced by the United States Supreme Court determination that sale and distribution of drugs, even though religiously motivated, was not immunized from legal accountability. . . .

The American Family Foundation is concerned with the infliction of injury through psychological manipulation, whether the manipulator be ostensibly religious or a part of a political group or a psychotherapeutic group. It would be regrettable if an espouser of the First Amendment sought to "check" the "present pattern" of AFF's providing prophylactic information to those who seek it.

As for your criticism of those professionals who testify on behalf of plaintiffs as expert witnesses, their professional community provides ample support for their position. Moreover, the availability of expert witnesses to plaintiffs seeking redress for injury is an essential premise of our adversary system. Suppression of opinion is not consistent with the First Amendment.

Truly, the issues you raise are issues involving liberty (which extends to victims suffering injury as well as the groups responsible for it) and responsibility for harm caused others. Those carefully crafted decisions of courts upholding liability no more pose a threat to religious liberty than do the determinations that the doctrine of "charitable immunity" is an unnecessary shield for religious groups seeking to avoid tort liability for injury inflicted in charitable institutions.

Your article suggests that the decisions imposing liability on destructive cults will encourage a flood of litigation against established religions. . . . Since, however, the decisions to which you refer relate to litigation started many years ago, one would expect, if you were correct, that the established religions would already be inundated by demands for damages from disaffected members. This has not occurred, and I doubt that it will occur because established religions do not employ the level of psychological manipulation observed in destructive cults.

I welcome the opportunity to demonstrate that the American Family Foundation is not an organization which deals in prejudice, fanaticism, and hysteria, or that its call for responsibility on the part of destructive cults is bad for religion or the public order. And I would like to correct any misapprehensions in this regard held by your publication, its editors, or its readers.

Herbert L. Rosedale
American Family Foundation
Weston, MA

Conservatism and Modernity

I was perplexed by Peter Berger's article in the January issue of First Things ("Capitalism and the Disorders of Modernity"). His argument seems to be directed against a certain kind of historical "paleoconservative" who sees a Golden Age in the social institutions or social spirit of some past time; yet his refutation of such a perspective invokes progress in dentistry, rhetorically shifting the evaluative criteria from sociology to technology. By these standards, we ought to prefer the Soviet Union of the 1970s to the early American republic. Berger's own non-historical, Augustinian "conservatism of pessimism" is of course an admirable tradition. But certainly Berger would agree that in addition to humanity's perennial aptitude for making a royal mess of things (original sin), modernity presents us with a new and unique set of social and moral problems. Surely it is the alarmed recognition of this fact which animates the paleoconservative critique of modernity.

Perhaps the strangest part of Berger's argument is his insistence on the superiority of capitalism to socialism, as it is dubious that paleoconservative critics of capitalism are liable to champion any kind of socialism. Still, in this context, Berger compares the deficiencies of every "actually existing socialism" with a vision of capitalism that seems to have little to do with any "actually existing capitalism." For example, he argues that because capitalism re-

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spects private property, including the "property" of tradition, it is the best system for maintaining traditional communities and virtues. Leaving aside the evidence that arrives each day from Eastern Europe which seems to show that the opposite is the case, that socialism there has in some sense "frozen" traditional ways of life, there is a more important issue: one wonders if tradition, when purchased and consumed like a commodity, can really play the role which some conservatives believe it must in any healthy society.

Furthermore, actually existing capitalism is *selective* in deciding what shall be private "property" and what shall be public. This fact has become salient recently with regard to solid waste disposal. Since this has been a "public" function while the production and marketing of consumables is private, we have effectively "subsidized" a throw-away culture. Environmentalists take note of the harm to nature: conservatives who recognize the problematic of modernity note the moral harm of such an arrangement. Similarly, we have a *public* education system which has been an effective agent in dissolving the ties and virtues of a traditional society. Private options may exist, but at prohibitively high costs. And in the past several decades we have systematically moved the burden of taxation from singles to families, penalizing that social institution which is the crucial transmitter of tradition. On another level, the revolution in no-fault divorce law which has been of no help to the modern American family has been legitimated by the individualist rights-discourse of modernity, which Berger seems to believe is an unqualified good.

Berger describes his position as one in which each generation must move beyond critique to make hard choices. Who would disagree with this? But our choice is not between socialism and pristine capitalism. Rather, our choice is how we shall pragmatically organize our economic and political life in such a way as to foster living well together. And any conservative understanding of such "living well" must include the "paleo" parts. While Berger champions the "creative destruction" of capitalism, it seems that some of capitalism's destruction is *not* creative, and at least some paleoconservatives have offered policy options which might mitigate some of this "destructive" destruction. If an honest hearing were given to these proposals, perhaps much of the antagonism between neos and paleos could be avoided.

Mark C. Henrie
Somerville, MA

On King and Hypocrisy

Your editiorial on Martin Luther King, Jr. (February) defends his status as an American hero in spite of his unrepented sins of adultery and plagiarism. In his defense, you borrow from St. Paul the term "earthen vessel" to characterize his "moral failings." But St. Paul's use of that term (II Corinthians 4:7) is in reference to human weakness brought on by a Christian confrontation with opposing forces of the sin of the *world*, not of *himself*.

While admitting that Dr. King was a hypocrite, you apparently are undervaluing the gravity of that sin and its effect on his credibility. King's message certainly was valid, but so was that of the Pharisees. Jesus admitted the validity of the Pharisees' teaching, but He condemned the Pharisees for their hypocrisy, refusing thereby to *honor* them for their teaching (Matthew 23). Just so, few will argue against the rightness of the civil rights cause as articulated by Dr. King, but the issue is whether or not Martin Luther King, Jr. qualifies as the American unifying symbol of that just cause.

Hypocrisy is the profoundly disqualifying sin of any would-be hero.

The Rev. Terry L. Wilkinson
Spring Valley, WI

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FIRST THINGS
MAY 1991

Christian Mission and the Third Millennium

Christianity is an inherently missionary faith. According to the Gospel of Matthew, the last word of the resurrected Lord to his disciples was this: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

The twentieth century has witnessed the greatest numerical expansion of Christianity in two millennia. And yet, with 1.5 billion Christians in the world, the missionary enterprise is hardly keeping pace with population growth. At least two sectors of Christian leadership, Roman Catholic and evangelical Protestant, are determined that the next century will be marked by a dramatic resurgence of missionary endeavor.

At the end of January, Pope John Paul II issued the encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio* (Mission of the Redeemer). The document received slight attention in the general media—and, indeed, in the Catholic press—but it could turn out to be the most important encyclical of this pontificate. "The mission of Christ the redeemer, which is entrusted to the church, is still very far from completion," declared the Pope. "As the second millennium after Christ's coming draws to an end, an overall view of the human race shows that this mission is still only beginning and that we must commit ourselves wholeheartedly to its service." John Paul underscores that concern for missions is a barometer of the church's health. "In the church's history, missionary drive has always been a sign of vitality, just as its lessening is a sign of a crisis of faith."

Whatever their other differences with the Pope, nobody agrees with him more fully on this score than evangelical Protestants. While the number of evangelicals (including fundamentalists) does not begin to match the 900 million Catholics in the world, their ranks are rapidly increasing—sometimes, as in Latin America, at the expense of Catholics. Thousands of evangelicals recently gathered in Urbana, Illinois, to plan and launch by the end of the millennium nothing less than the evangelization of the world. Missiologists pointed to signs that we are witnessing the initial stages of a worldwide movement of unprecedented dimensions.

It is reported that 3,500 new churches are opened every week. In China 28,000 people convert to Christianity each day. In Africa it is 20,000 per day. South Korea is now 30 percent Christian, and Indonesia, officially Islamic, is 25 percent Christian. New strategies are being employed for the "re-Christianization" of Western Europe, and in Central and Eastern Europe missionaries cannot keep up with the demand for Bibles and Christian ministry. The crisis in the Gulf, some evangelicals claim, has opened new missionary opportunities in Islamic countries that brutally persecute non-Muslim "infidels." The very upbeat picture offered at Urbana is only part of the world reality, for many evangelicals equate "Christian" with evangelical Protestant. When the Roman Catholic missionary enterprise is included, the renewed assertiveness of Christianity on the world scene is even more impressive.

While undoubtedly testifying to the vitality of the church, that missionary assertiveness is a puzzle and scandal to many non-Christians. Many view it as a threat both to civil peace and interreligious understanding. They are joined by the churches of liberal Protestantism that have, for the most part, "outgrown" the missionary impulse. These churches have long since replaced a devotion to "missions" with support for a "wholistic mission" in which social transformation takes priority over what, they now remember with embarrassment, they once called winning souls for Christ. Not surprisingly, these are the churches that, while still possessing considerable status and resources in the West, constitute a fast-declining and dispirited

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minority in world Christianity.

Secularists are puzzled and scandalized by the resurgent Christian mission because they were miseducated to believe that this is not the way history would turn out. It has been a secular dogma that, as people became more enlightened, religion would either wither away or be limited to what people do in the confines of their solitude. A remarkable portion of our cultural elites is still in thrall to that dogma. Such people are sincerely offended by the missionary claim that some religions are true and others false. They reflexively associate such claims with fanaticism and the wars of religion that in earlier centuries almost destroyed civil society. They tend to be blind to the fact that the massively destructive fanaticisms of this century, notably Nazism and Communism, were explicitly and adamantly anti-Christian in character.

Far from being fanatical or coercive, the Christian mission is essential to civil peace. That, at least, is the argument of John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio*. As he has on many previous occasions, the Pope contends that respect for the person, and especially respect for freedom of conscience, is the bedrock of human rights and democratic governance. Such respect, says John Paul, is itself grounded in the Christian message of man made in the image of God and destined for communion with God through Jesus Christ.

Unlike many evangelicals and most fundamentalists, Catholics do not believe that non-Christians are necessarily lost eternally. The Catholic teaching is captured in the phrase, *anima naturaliter Christiania:* the human spirit is naturally Christian. As grace builds on nature, so grace builds on whatever truth, including religious truth, non-Christians may possess. As John Paul wrote in the first encyclical of his pontificate, "Christ the redeemer fully reveals man to himself. The man who wishes to understand himself thoroughly must draw near to Christ. The redemption that took place through the cross has definitively restored to man his dignity and given back meaning to his life in the world."

In the present encyclical, John Paul is writing, in part, against "progressive" Roman Catholic theologians who have followed the lead of liberal Protestantism in vitiating the missionary mandate by adopting the "pluralistic" argument that all religions are more or less equal. The Pope contends for an authentic pluralism that calls for intense engagement between Christians and non-Christians on the assumption that our deepest differences make all the difference in this world and the next. Nonetheless, whether in the Catholic form of fulfillment or in the evangelical form of a more confrontational either/or, the Christian missionary proposition cannot help but be troubling to people of other religions or none. The most pressing questions are raised with respect to Judaism and Islam.

Jews who have thought religiously about the relationship between Judaism and Christianity generally understand the inherently missionary nature of the latter. Observant Jews have noted that it is typically more secularized Jews who demand that Christians abandon their distinctive claims and acknowledge that Judaism is "equally true." That demand, they note, is driven less by devotion to the truth of Judaism than by indifference or hostility to any religious claims to truth. Believing Jews, on the other hand, recognize that there are critical differences between Judaism and Christianity that will not be resolved short of the Messianic Age. While believing Jew and believing Christian have a common faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and while they have a common and frequently troubled border of historical experience, and while they have a common horizon of eschatological hope, both understand that the inescapable difference is over what to make of Jesus, whom Christians call the Christ.

Moreover, in the American situation many thoughtful Jews recognize that they, too, have a social stake, if not a religious stake, in the vitality of Christianity. (Witness the remarkable symposium, "Judaism and American Public Life" in the March 1990 issue.) There can be no doubt, however, that if Christians think that vital Christianity requires Christian mission, including Christian mission to Jews, that poses a problem for Jews. The appropriate response to the problem, our colleague Rabbi David Novak and others have urged, is not for Jews to demand that Christians stop being vitally Christian. The appropriate response is for Jews to become more vitally Jewish, to ground themselves more firmly in the belief and observance that make possible and necessary the Jewish-Christian encounter until the End Time.

Islam is something else. One of the most unusual features of the Gulf crisis is that Americans were, with self-consciously moral intention, coming to the aid of countries that are militantly contemptuous of the religion and morality of most Americans. Oddly enough, among Arab countries, Iraq was the exception in its tolerance of Christianity. In Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, Christian evangelizing is legally prohibited. In much of the Arab world, it is a capital crime for a Muslim to become a Christian. In Egypt and elsewhere, Muslims who convert are jailed, fined, or, in many cases, simply "disappear." Evangelicals who believe that new alignments following the Gulf war will begin to open up missionary opportunities call these nations "creative access countries." Despite fierce persecution, they report that there are growing Christian undergrounds in these officially Muslim countries.

In *Redemptoris Missio*, the Pope does not mention Islam by name, but the message is unmistakable: "On her part, the church addresses people with full respect for their freedom. Her mission does not restrict freedom, but rather promotes it. The church proposes;

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she imposes nothing. She respects individuals and cultures, and she honors the sanctuary of conscience. To those who for various reasons oppose missionary activity, the church repeats: Open the doors to Christ!" It seems doubtful that the West's military allies among the Arab nations will open their doors to the influence of Christian persuasion any time soon.

And yet, the Gulf war may have set in motion basic changes that will affect also the future of Christianity in the worlds of Islam. Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations were at first exceedingly nervous about permitting the military forces of the infidels on their sacred land. In the fall of 1990 there were embarrassing contentions over public worship by Christians and Jews, and U.S. chaplains were cautioned to hide the religious insignia on their uniforms. At least for the time it took to defeat Iraq, the Arab host countries became more religiously tolerant after a while. In addition, the myth of Arab nationalism, driven by Islamic passions, was dealt a severe blow by the war. Arabs were divided not only politically and militarily, but also religiously, with the most prestigious religious authorities endorsing cooperation with the victorious allied forces.

While those religious authorities cannot be expected to welcome the Christian mission, the painful ambivalence of Islamic culture toward the West has undoubtedly been intensified. The pressure to move toward democracy—which of necessity includes religious freedom—will likely increase in the years ahead. Secularist theories to the contrary, modern democratic governance is an achievement of the Christian West—with all the ambiguity attending the phrase "Christian West." It is premised upon the limitation of state power by belief in the prior and God-given dignity of the human person and the citizen's allegiance to an Authority higher than the authority of the state. In the West, that belief made possible and necessary the institutionalized distinction of realms between the civil and spiritual ("separation of church and state").

That distinction of realms has been abhorrent to Islam, which insists upon a "total system" that subsumes the religious, cultural, political, and economic under one authority. Increased interaction with the West may well insinuate democratic ideas into Islamic culture. Islamic religious authorities, as well as despotic Arab rulers, will certainly view this as a threat. At the same time, it is a challenge that could elicit from Islam an effort to find religious legitimations for democracy within its own tradition. V. S. Naipaul has tellingly analyzed the ways in which Muslim societies have tried to take the economic and technological benefits of the West while rejecting the political and economic institutions that produce those benefits. Most of all, they reject the culture that undergirds those institutions. That could, to the possible benefit of Islam, change in the future.

William McNeill's magisterial survey of world history is titled *The Rise of the West.* The rise of the West continues to be the story line of our time, and almost certainly well into the next millennium. Christianity began in the Middle East, and the majority of Christians today live in countries that are ordinarily thought to be non-Western. But wherever Christianity is projected in the world today, it is a Christianity that has been refracted through the experience of the West—an experience that Christianity has also shaped. Call it cultural imperialism or call it Providential purpose, such is the undeniable fact. Third Worldist ideologues in the Geneva-based World Council of Churches notwithstanding, the Christian mission today is, for the most part, defined by centers in the West—in Rome and in the energies of American evangelicalism.

The importance of respecting missionary initiatives by the "younger churches," notably those in Africa and Asia, is emphatically underscored in documents such as *Redemptoris Missio* and evangelical gatherings such as that in Urbana. There is an understandable anxiety to downplay the "linkage" between the Christian message and Western culture. Certainly there is much in Western culture, especially in the popular culture now exported everywhere, that is incompatible with the Christian message. Certainly Christians in the West need to be challenged by the devotion and thought patterns of Christians in other cultures. And certainly the Christian gospel must never be identified uncritically with any cultural expression. The God to whom that gospel witnesses stands in transcendent judgment over all cultures. That being said—and said again and again—however, the story line of world history, driven in large part by the Christian mission, will likely continue to be the rise of the West. That reality will be, for better and for worse, the dominant factor in defining the third millennium.

Opinion

The "Mabelized" Church

Peter J. Leithart

Exploring the influence of televangelism on American religion in his book *The Struggle for America's Soul,* Princeton sociologist Robert Wuthnow presents a typical, though hypothetical, case study:

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Mabel Miller. Mabel lives alone, thousands of miles from her family. She grew up in a Baptist Church, but now, approaching sixty-five, she no longer attends church. Instead, she gets up early on Sunday morning, switches on the television, and sits "alone in her living room getting God via satellite." Sipping a cup of tea in front of a preaching face, Mabel "epitomizes what sociologists have been calling privatized religion."

Yet, as Wuthnow brilliantly points out, on closer inspection we discover that Mabel's "concerns . . . are not so strictly private as we thought. She tells of her deep interest in the direction moral standards have been going in recent years. She watches, she says, to gain information about important social and political issues of the day. She routinely receives letters from Jerry Falwell, sometimes sent by certified mail, which keep her abreast of the latest developments at the Supreme Court and in the White House." Paradoxically, then, "at the same time [televangelism] privatizes, it also makes public."

Mabel Miller symbolizes in a strikingly accurate way the theologically and politically conservative branches of American Christianity. Mabel symbolizes American Christianity not in the fact that she watches television preachers, but in the strange dialectic of public and private in her religious life. Her worship and doctrine are wholly private concerns; Wuthnow calls her personal brand of religiosity "Mabelism." When she enters the public realm, she does so as a political actor—writing letters, signing petitions, donating money.

Notwithstanding recent, welcome appeals for an evangelical catholicism, a large segment of that amorphous beast known as Evangelicalism remains caught in the same dialectic. Though evangelicals were not politically passive before the 1970s, few would deny that they have now entered the public arena in a more aggressively political way than in the preceding decades. The public presence of much of contemporary evangelicalism, both left and right, is a decidedly political presence.

Meanwhile, doctrinal standards are loosening. Survey evidence for this conclusion is supported by anecdotal evidence. I commonly hear stories of members and even elders of Presbyterian churches who have little understanding of or use for the church's confessional standards, and of members of Calvinist churches who are shocked to learn that Calvin taught predestination.

Traditional forms of worship are dissolving as well. Presbyterians have historically been among the most strict in matters of liturgy. Yet the church growth "theology" of liturgy has taken some sectors of conservative Presbyterianism by storm and is making hesitant inroads even into the strictest of the Lutheran denominations. Psalms and the great hymns of the Church have been replaced by "scripture choruses" sung to warmed-over pop tunes. Profound but difficult music finds little or no place in worship. Anecdotal preaching has replaced the exposition of the Word. Most evangelicals commune almost as seldom as the congregation of a medieval cathedral. The Reformation principle that the chief work of the priesthood of believers is to offer the sacrifice of praise is overthrown in favor of the principle that the Church must at all costs make visitors feel comfortable.

Much of evangelicalism has been, in a word, thoroughly "Mabelized": While maintaining high political visibility, it is increasingly doctrinally pluralistic, ecclesiologically invisible, and liturgically banal.

Privatization and politicization seem polar opposites, but they are in reality two effects of the same event. The late Alexander Schmemann once wrote that secularization is the "negation of worship," of man as *homo adorans*, of man as priest. Secularists may genuinely believe in a Supreme Being, but what they cannot tolerate is the demand that, in the words of the *Book of Common Prayer*, "it is . . . our bounden duty, that we should at *all* times, and in *all* places, give thanks." Secularism can be seen as a denial of the profoundly eucharistic character of human life.

Secularization often takes the form of politicization. James Davison Hunter's researches detected among some evangelicals a "shift . . . from the transcendent to the immanent," a part of a larger tendency to conform to "the cognitive and normative assumptions of the modern world view." Hunter notes that on the edges of evangelicalism are some for whom "social and political activism is redefined as the essential Christian act." What Hunter is describing is precisely a shift from worship to politics as the chief focus of the Church's life and mission.

When the Reformers spoke of an "invisible" Church, they did not mean to suggest that Christianity is a purely private religion. On the contrary, they insisted that the preaching of the Word and administration of the sacraments—both public acts—were essential marks of the Church. For the Reformers, the "face" of the Church was publicly unveiled not primarily in political action or even in "little platoons" of Christians involved in ministry, but in the gathering for the preaching of the Word and the celebration of the Eucharist. Though the Reformers were hardly apolitical, they knew that the Church has been given a public task that transcends politics.

The Church has always been the object of vicious ridicule and slander. In the early centuries of the Christian era, Christians were accused of incest and cannibalism. Today, many of the finest and most courageous American Christians are vilified as bigots and fascists. That is to be expected. Jesus warned, indeed promised, persecutions.

But the difference between the contemporary slander and the ancient one points to a significant difference in the world's perception of the Church. Today, the world views the Church as an interest group, intent

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on seizing political power. That is certainly a gross distortion, but it tells us something important not only about the world's own obsessions, but also about the "face" that the Church is presenting to the world.

By contrast, the ancient slander shows that pagans, if they knew anything at all about the Church, knew that the Church gathered to eat and drink the flesh and blood of her Savior and greeted one another with a kiss of peace. The world perceived the Church as a liturgical, not a political, community because the Church's public presence was primarily liturgical. We will know that the Church is being de-"Mabelized," and that a proper balance is being restored, when the slander of fascism recedes and the accusation of cannibalism regains currency.

Peter J. Leithart *is a frequent contributor to* First Things.

Art and the Spirit

Franky Schaeffer

The expression of art—the exploration of figurative and abstract thought in tangible external forms—is unique to human beings. Even as we think in words, we imagine in the "language" of images. Art is one of the great facilitators of human dialogue, and it provides us as well with the icons we need in order to make sense of reality. Without art and language, the human race stands blind and mute, its emotions and intellect imprisoned forever in a lump of inert flesh.

Creation gives life meaning. We know God only because of His choice to create. If the words concerning our being—that we are made "in the image of God"—have a clear meaning, surely it is seen in our capacity to imitate God's creative character.

This theological-cultural vision of the creative process as something ordained and blessed by Providence is the basis of the Jewish-Christian civilization that emerged from its classical roots and formed what we now call the West (our "Western" heritage first being firmly established by the Eastern Orthodox Church in Byzantium long before the Latin West had crawled out of its long dark age into the light of the high Middle Ages).

In our contemporary post-Christian culture, we no longer have the coherent artistic vision that inspired our spiritual ancestors in Latin Europe or Byzantium. If the modern Western world were to produce icons, they would be the blank images of Mark Rothko's paintings, not the Byzantine mosaics of saints found in Ravenna or in the frescoes of Fra Filippo Lippi. Yet despite the poverty of its spiritual vision, art continues to define our culture. But, as illustrated by the recent ruckus over art funding by the National Endowment for the Arts, the impact of art on society today is of an uncertain and morally dubious nature. Esthetic, spiritual, and artistic lines have been blurred in such a way as to make what art now is radically different—and generally not for the better—from what it once was. The change is not so much a matter of style as of epistemology and philosophy.

For one thing, the distinction between art and political propaganda has been all but erased. Art has of course always been subject to manipulation by people with various political or religious agendas. But generally these people merely sought to advance themselves on the coattails of the transcendent themes expressed in art. They did not, as we do today, seek to change the very meaning of art itself for their political ends. A seventeenth-century patron of the arts may have insinuated himself into a picture of the Virgin and Christ Child, but he did not banish all pictures of the Virgin and Child and replace them with portraits of himself. Michelangelo's *David* may have been commissioned by certain Florentines to express and promote the civic spirit of Florence, but even this supreme humanistic statement was rendered as a homage to the greatness and potential of the whole human race. It was not a sculpture only about White Florentine European Males, but a statement about the nature of man, as "little lower than the angels"—a theme which a proud African Masai warrior could appreciate just as much as Lorenzo de Medici.

Hitching one's political fortunes to the changeless themes of the spirit expressed in art is a very different matter from abolishing those themes altogether and replacing them with mere politics, race, and gender advocacy. The patrons of the past sought to bask in the light cast by the arts, not to extinguish the light altogether for their own limited purposes. It was precisely *because* the arts were understood to express fundamental, universal human and spiritual truths that patrons, often of less than noble or truthful dispositions, sought to cast themselves in the role of civilized sponsors of the arts, much as today's mobster, coveting respectability, may wish to be seen in the company of a pious churchman.

Art in the twentieth century has at times been so politicized as wholly to lose its transcendent vision. This phenomenon has been most obviously displayed in crude Nazi and Socialist realist art, but it is also in evidence in the present. The modern feminist movement, for example, has managed through its literary criticism to reduce literature to little more than politics, a supposed object lesson in patriarchal tyranny on the one hand and a vehicle for feminist ideological aspirations on the other. In the former case, current feminist ideology is read back into history and made determinative of judgments on that history; in

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the latter case, feminist concerns become the touchstone for artistic judgments. Thus it is that *The Color Purple* and *The Temple of My Familiar* by African-American feminist and lesbian author Alice Walker are said to be taught more frequently in many university literature departments than Shakespeare. This is obviously not because anyone argues seriously for the superiority of Walker's literary talent, but because she is more "PC" (Politically Correct) than Shakespeare, who is not "PC" at all.

The trend of harnessing the arts to causes of gender, race, sexual orientation, etc. undermines the potential contribution to our divided culture that the arts could uniquely make—that is, the creation of common language available to all that *transcends* human divisions and deals in a universal currency of human aspirations and experience.

Whatever satisfaction the "knowledge elite" may have in the present state of the arts, the general public is voting against it with their feet. The disgruntled public looks to the past to fill the void left by our often sterile contemporary art. Thus, for example, little late-twentieth-century classical music is performed—or enjoyed on those rare occasions when it is performed. Audiences and musicians alike (a few crusading conductors excepted) prefer the more humane, less political, or at least less philosophically nihilistic music of the past to the failed classical compositions of the present. This phenomenon is unique to our time and points to the fact that ours is a period of history that seems to have lost confidence in its own high culture. Through the late nineteenth century, newly composed serious music was popularly enjoyed by the contemporaries of the composers. Audiences for that music were largely made up of members of the general public, not a cultural, let alone "knowledge," elite. Popular enjoyment of high culture applied to the figurative arts as well. There were long lines to see the spectacular unveiling of Ghiberti's *Doors of Paradise* for the baptistery in fifteenth-century Florence. No such lines of ordinary people attend the unveiling of some new minimalist sculpture today.

Nevertheless, much as the art of the past is enjoyed today, there is often no real philosophical or religious link between modern audiences and that art. We tend to enjoy the artistic fruits generated by the philosophical certainties of pre-twentieth-century artists on a merely sentimental and superficial basis. Thus the ability of the rich past to teach the poor present is limited. In the case of music, again, today's value-neutral, secular, PC audience may appreciate traditional classical music's melodically pleasing composition without sharing or understanding its spiritual content. (Even less will they admit that the musical expression of their own relativistic philosophy produces the music they hate.) Nothing could illustrate this better than the spectacle of a modern audience attempting to understand a performance of Handel's *Messiah* in a purely secular context. Bringing typically twentieth-century sentiments to the experience—sentiments hostile to the moral and religious certainties that inspired such an art work—the secularized modern person can scarcely begin to understand this or comparable works. It is therefore no mystery why today's deconstructionist mythology has found fertile ground among the spiritually deracinated students common on today's college campuses. Nor is it hard to understand why today's secular neoconservative is having a hard time inspiring a return to high culture. Those without religious faith have little more than nostalgia to offer as an alternative to the decadent relativisms of the present.

What will the future hold for the arts in our society? I believe that two very different conceivable destinies lie ahead. One is a continuing slide down the path I have been describing, its end the moral liquidation of our high culture. On the other hand, there lies a possible path of artistic revival—a revival that will become a reality only through a rebirth of the spirit. If we can once again capture the religious sacramental view of life that has always been the true foundation of lasting artistic creation, this second path may be open to us.

FRANCIS (a.k.a. Franky) SCHAEFFER, *a film director and screenwriter, is also the author of six books, including, most recently,* Sham Pearls for Real Swine.

The Case for Educational Retrenchment

Herbert London

It is virtually axiomatic in higher education circles that the more money spent on the educational enterprise the better the results. Although just what "better results" might mean is often left unclear, the nexus between money and quality education is rarely subject to challenge. The word most deplored by academics and administrators is "retrenchment," a term that inspires fear and loathing.

While it is of course true that educational enterprises require money, there is something odd about the assumption that infusion of additional funds to the academic operation will necessarily result in improved education. After years of constructing budgets, I have

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found very little evidence to support the claim that money buys sound education. In fact, at the risk of facing an auto-da-fé organized by my colleagues, I would argue that retrenchment has its virtues.

Very often a college faculty, forced to cut its budget, must consider what is truly indispensable in the curriculum. In my opinion, this is a much-needed exercise. In past flush periods for higher education spending, new programs and courses were often added without much consideration or debate. As long as money was available, curricular innovations easily found their way into the college catalogue. As a consequence, whatever might have existed of a carefully crafted, philosophically coherent curriculum gave way to an academic smorgasbord, or what some analysts have called the "academic supermarket."

There is a dubious link between genuine scholarship and such fashionable courses as peace studies, feminist literature, seminars in social activism, consciousness raising, semiotics, and a host of other current preoccupations. But since the argument could be made that these courses fall into the realm of "curriculum enrichment," and since taxpayers and unwary parents appeared willing to pay for them, there was little resistance to their approval and implementation. But now the financial well is running dry, and a number of formerly sacred cows are coming under careful scrutiny.

A recent book, *The National Review College Guide,* lists what its editors, Charles Sykes and Brad Miner, consider the nation's "fifty best liberal arts colleges." While the schools vary widely, they hold a number of things in common. Most of them—Columbia College is a notable exception—are small and without large endowments. All are private institutions unable to count on the beneficence of annual government subventions. And all of them have a well-developed philosophy of education manifest in a clearly defined curriculum.

Conspicuously avoided in these colleges is the Chinese-menu approach to education. These institutions know what is worth teaching and scrupulously resist the idea of having undergraduates determine their own programs. Rarely have I encountered a seventeen-year-old who upon entering the academy has a firm grasp of what to read and study. The philosophy of the curriculum is a reflection of the collective wisdom of the faculty. Where you have a curriculum without a clear philosophy, you have either a faculty without wisdom or one that has abdicated one of its fundamental responsibilities.

Aside from offering the opportunity to bring coherence to the curriculum, retrenchment also has the virtue of capturing faculty attention, somewhat in the manner of a hangman's noose. As Robert Iosue, president at York College, has pointed out most persuasively, faculty members aren't very productive—assuming, that is, that productivity is related to the number of teaching hours in a week. During the 1960s and 1970s, it became customary for faculty members to teach no more than eight to twelve hours a week. Before that period, teaching normally involved somewhere between sixteen and twenty hours a week. If one were to assume time for preparation of lectures, grading of papers, and office hours, the typical professor today works something like a twenty-hour teaching week. The defense of this limited teaching schedule is that scholars are using the rest of their time to explore the frontiers of knowledge. Yet as most surveys indicate, only a small percentage of faculty members engage in research and writing and an even smaller number publish.

It therefore may be fair to suggest that budgetary reductions can encourage a renewed interest in teaching, an interest that has atrophied in recent years. A resurgent interest in teaching may have a beneficial effect on students, even though the relationship between teaching and learning is often ambiguous.

While the relationship between spending and educational achievement is wrapped in a fog of uncertainty, there is no reason to assume that educational cuts will adversely affect academic achievement. It is instructive to note that in the last eight years New York State has increased educational spending by 102 percent in real terms, i.e., after accounting for inflation. During this same period median SAT scores of New York State students declined by seven points. By focusing the attention of faculty members now accustomed to routine spending increases, cuts in funding may have the unintended effect of improving the situation of teaching and learning about which a concerned public is justifiably upset.

Herbert London *is Dean of the Gallatin Division at New York University and a Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute.*

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Religion in the Unheavenly City

Roger Starr

Half a mile, not more, separates 50th Street and Park Avenue in central Manhattan from the northwest corner of 42nd Street and Seventh Avenue. But the two points mark the antipodes of New York City's axis of religious dedication: to timelessness at one pole, to change at the other.

On the 50th Street corner stands the community house of St. Bartholomew's Protestant Episcopal Church, one of a small complex of structures and handsome open space covering the entire Park Avenue frontage of the block north of 50th Street. The buildings include a 1920s version of an eastern basilica, a cloistered walk, and a garden space as well as the community building.

On the 42nd Street corner there's an excited woman with a microphone in her hand, a loudspeaker behind her, and a few pedestrians in front briefly hypnotized by the voice that comes from the box on the pavement. The cone of speech uttered from the box is, so to speak, her nave; the microphone her pulpit. The woman wrestles, orally, with the devil. "Do you think you can go on with your evil ways?" the challenge issues hoarsely across sidewalks and streets for the edification of Satan's presumed followers. "Jesus said there would be earthquakes, fires, damnation to cleanse the vileness of the flesh. Your flesh. Do you think God does not notice what you do with your body? You think He does not know the difference between good and evil and remember how you try to drag others down in the foulness of your ways?" An Hispanic accent intensifies the urgency in her voice, suggesting that on the brink of doom she could not wait to Americanize her speech. At this moment her listeners must either fall on their knees in repentance or flee from disaster. But attention wavers as the traffic lights change, and the obligation of staying alive in the city takes over.

Back on Park Avenue, in St. Bartholomew's, a different struggle, equally earnest but inaudible to the passerby, has just ended. The adversaries here were two groups of parishioners. On one side the rector and his vestry and a majority of the present parishioners: they wanted to lease the site of the church's community house to a builder who proposed to demolish the present community house and construct a large office building on its site. He would have allowed the church itself an indoor substitute for a community house in the new building, more spacious, modern, and, the rector's adherents claimed, more suitable for carrying on what they describe as religiously inspired good works. The proposal also gave the church the right to participate in the rental income of upper floors in the office building, enhancing its ability to restore the remaining structures of the St. Bart's complex, including the sanctuary itself.

Their opponents, including former vestry members and communicants as well as a well-behaved but emotionally roused company of outsiders whose participation reflects their devotion to good architecture and city landmarks, believed that maintaining St. Bart's buildings as they stand is the most relevant good work of which this, or possibly any, urban church is capable.

The New York City Landmarks Commission, exercising its statutory powers of architectural preservation, refused to allow demolition of the community house. St. Bart's appealed, and the matter wound up in the courts. It is ironic that the architecturalists, many of whom are on other occasions outspoken admirers of the First Amendment's metaphorical wall of separation between church and state, supported the city's right to analyze the books and financial records of the church in an effort to determine whether, by cutting salaries and activities other than building maintenance, the church might be able to afford necessary structural repairs and improvements without invading on a major scale the capital it accumulated

ROGER STARR *is a member of the* New York Times *editorial board and author of* The Rise and Fall of New York City.

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from donors and testators in years gone by and with the earnings of which it tries to balance its present budget.

In any case, the architecturalists carried the courts with them. The U.S. Supreme Court declined in early March to hear an appeal from a ruling of lower federal courts that New York City has the right to make the church use its resources to maintain its buildings as directed by the Landmarks Commission because the congregation failed to prove that its present community house is no longer satisfactory for the congregation's proper religious purposes.

This decision was consistent with a ruling in an earlier case by New York State's highest court. That decision, involving the building of the Ethical Culture Society (which the state court, perhaps generously, classified as a religious institution), held that refusing permission to alter or demolish a landmarked religious building was not an unconstitutional taking of property or denial of rights so long as the building could still be used for its original purpose. That ruling (and the major costs of professional services that disputes over landmarking impose on a religious body challenging it) stimulated resistance among a wide spectrum of denominations. In effect, the Ethical Culture decision could foreclose the possibility that growth in an institution, or change in its surroundings, might force a religious institution to realize the value of its property to pay for a new building, perhaps in a different place, in order to fulfill its religious duties as it sees them.

The centrality of the landmarking of churches and synagogues to the role of religion in a major city is indicated not only by the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on lawyer's fees by St. Bart's and its opponents, but by the supporting briefs, *amici curiae*, filed on behalf of twelve religious bodies ranging from the New York State Council of Churches to the New York Board of Rabbis. Supporting briefs were filed also by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York and Brooklyn and the New York State Catholic Conference; by the Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew (a New York church also involved in a landmark dispute); and by the Council on Religious Freedom.

When the New York City Landmarks Law, one of the nation's earliest if not its first, was proposed in the early 1960s, public attention was drawn immediately to a possible impact on private, profit-motivated ownership. Even the law's strongest boosters recognized that there might be problems of constructive confiscation if the proposed law forced an owner of real property to forego, without compensation, the right to alter or demolish a building because it had been designated a landmark.

While zoning also restricts owners' rights to deal with their property as they choose, it does so on a different basis. Zoning restrictions on the use of private property are based on safety and health considerations and are enforceable as an exercise of the police power of local government. To be valid, a zoning law must be drawn in conformity with a general plan for conserving the community's health and safety by prescribing land usage. Such a plan must cover every parcel of land under the jurisdiction of the government with police power.

Landmarking a building for its historic or cultural value stretches the police power beyond its traditional limits of protecting public health and safety, and then stretches it still further. Landmarking does not depend upon a plan that affects every parcel of property. It affects only those buildings that happen to be older than the statutory minimum age and that possess certain attributes, not previously identified, that led the members of a commission to designate it a landmark. That decision is inevitably more personal, less objective, than the mathematically expressible standards of a modern zoning law.

In response to objections and in order to provide at least minimal equity, the law finally included a hardship provision, subsequently revised, stipulating that if an owner could not, after being landmarked, earn a 6 percent return on the assessed value of the property, and if the Landmarks Commission could not find a way to assure such a return, the landmark designation was voidable.

While that gave some relief to profit-motivated owners, it soon appeared that it offered nothing at all to any owner who was not motivated by financial considerations. Thus the law denied statutory relief to educational institutions like private schools and colleges, cultural institutions like museums, and all religious institutions. No statutory standard spells out the nature of a hardship imposed on such a non-profit owner that would entitle him to alter the appearance of or demolish the structure.

Owners of such properties have consistently complained that lack of a hardship standard applicable to their landmarked properties is unfair, especially since the Landmarks Commission has demonstrated a tendency to landmark what they claim is a disproportionate number of religious buildings (95 of 600 as of 1986).

Supporters of the Landmark law have opposed such owners consistently. Some have argued that showing special favor to owners of religious buildings would constitute a breach of the same wall of separation that they, or others on their side, have not hesitated to ignore when it comes to governmental inquiry into how the religious institution spends its funds. Others have not found such disputation necessary. They merely point out that if ecclesiastical architecture were given an escape clause on the grounds of hardship, New York City would lose a lot of good old buildings. The possibility that, unless a hardship

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clause were inserted, New York might lose a lot of good old congregations does not seem to bother them. Nor are they troubled when it is pointed out to them that, if we are to compare the values imputed constitutionally to religion and architecture, religious activity is protected by the First Amendment while nothing anywhere promises architects freedom from government restraints, about the proliferation of which architects are often heard to complain.

Even though they do not seek to make a profit, the hardship issue often arises for churches, synagogues, and, presumably, mosques and temples because of the rapid changes that characterize settlement patterns of urban residents. Devotion to a religious institution rarely determines a family's choice of neighborhood. As the character of an area changes, families move, leaving their homes to new arrivals, probably of another economic status and perhaps of a different religious persuasion. The religious institution to which the movers belonged may lose so many members that it finds itself forced to sell land and buildings and move on, using the proceeds of the sale as foundation for a new structure in a likelier location. A landmark designation tends to block this progression. Only a limited number of buyers want to take over an aging house of worship that, under the landmarks law, can be turned into a discotheque on the inside but cannot be demolished or changed in its exterior aspects, not even to allow a sign warning or promising strangers that, despite appearances, they are unlikely to find worshippers inside.

Nothing in the law compensates the non-profit owner for the loss in resale value that can follow from permanent landmark restriction on the future of the land. Nor, in most cases, is there any provision for financial help to keep the building's unique but, to the religious owners, perhaps superfluous ornamentation in the state of repair demanded by the Commission to sustain landmark quality.

Brent Brolin, a New York architect and architectural critic, author of *The Battle of St. Bart's,* a book-length account of the fight over that church's landmark status, is one of the few landmark enthusiasts who offers an excuse for lack of a statutory provision of hardship relief to non-profit owners of landmark buildings. He claims that case law, made by judges in the courtroom, is an adequate substitute for statute law. If that were true, the statute would not have had to include hardship relief for profit-motivated owners as it now does. Brolin may have forgotten that higher-court decisions are binding only on the courts directly below them, and then only when the facts of the earlier decision are congruent with those in the case before the second court.

All in all, the rejection of statutory hardship protection for non-profit buildings reflects the view of contemporary legislators and jurists, perhaps influenced by the widely asserted beliefs of landmark enthusiasts, that in a democratic society local government is competent to define the primary obligations of a religious body within its boundaries.

It is possible that landmark enthusiasts are inspired not only by the aesthetic qualities of fine architecture, but by their symbolic representation of religious doctrine. That would adequately explain devotion to saving, intact, structures of the quality of, let us say, Mont-St. Michel or Kings College at Cambridge University. The present St. Bartholomew's and its community house may be the best early-twentieth-century adaptation of Eastern European sacred architecture that the city of New York could produce, but it seems unlikely that it is capable of inspiring the same religious awe that earlier expressions of almost total unity-in-faith are able to inspire even in skeptical modern visitors.

Oldtime New Yorkers familiar with the city's ecclesiastical rivalries suggested that, far from celebrating unity in Christendom, the choice of a Byzantine architectural vocabulary for St. Bartholomew's shrine—only two city blocks east of St. Patrick's Roman Catholic cathedral—could have been intended as a gentle extramural reminder to the latter's communicants that large sections of what was the Papal See are now closer to Anglican theology and practices (and thus to America's Protestant Episcopal Church) than to those of Rome.

None can question the power of great religious architecture to inspire awe. Nor doubt that in certain historic periods when the unity of faith dominated men's consciousness that awe was energized not only by such a building's symmetry and grace but by its reflection of the perfection and the timelessness of God. As a state of being, timelessness is a concept so difficult to grasp, at least by Western minds, that architects have tried to render it symbolically, a stone steeple reaching into a cloudless sky. Or, as in the case of St. Bart's, by a dome, the perfect three-dimensional figure in that every point on its surface is equidistant from its source at the center. Unfortunately, the dome went up some years after the rest of the St. Bart's complex was finished, and it was made nearly invisible by a surge of skyscrapers to the East, North, and South of it, long before the passage of the landmark law.

It need not be assumed that those who wanted to prevent changes in St. Bart's sought to save it for its religious connotations. On the contrary, they often give the impression that they are truly comfortable in a religious building only when satisfied that no one will be able to embarrass them by experiencing religious awe in their presence. What they seek from landmarking is reassurance that there are limits to the physical and moral changes they will have to experience in their own lifetimes. There is nothing trivial nor shameful about hoping for such a consummation, but, turning from Park Avenue where religious emotions are fixed on conserving the present, to listen more

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attentively to the street preacher on Times Square, is to find that God's timelessness is important because it offers men and women a lasting direction for change.

The street preacher, struggling against the ambient noises of urban life, her audience distracted not only by noise but by the trickle-down aestheticism of the times, is not, of course, arguing for change in the structure of the city's buildings, but change in the hearts of her listeners, in their faith and then, perhaps inevitably, in their behavior (an obsolescent term connoting "lifestyle").

Between Park Avenue and Times Square one can imagine a continuum including each of the city's religious institutions, of whatever faith or sect, age or condition, ranked on a scale that measures which of two fundamental postulates of religion—the timelessness of Divinity and the malleability of man—is more important to its congregation. And shaping their messages accordingly.

The street preacher speaks to people whom she understands to be lost. Not lost in the Park Avenue meaning of adhering to the wrong view of architecture, or, as in too many of the religious institutions on the continuum, because they adhere to the wrong politics, but lost to God, to virtue, to life everlasting. Her mission is to recall them from the depths, reclaim them to face the moral life, free them from the evil forces that have them in their grasp.

II

Such have been the motives of what one might call the street religions of the great cities. At times they have existed as a separate branch, a special order within the walls of the established churches and synagogues, only to discover that a common book of prayer was not always enough to overcome the differences in doctrine and practice between the old and the new.

Sometimes street religions were successfully absorbed by the older structures—organizational as well as architectural. Sometimes, as most remarkably in the cases of what became the Lutheran and Methodist churches, despite the wishes of the original leadership, what started as a mission to revive original commitments of the older institution became a movement to leave the older church altogether.

Although religious inspiration, reaching a level of hysteria at times, can be found on the street or in a storefront, religion is more than moments of inspiration. Street religions lack the sustaining power that fellowship and institutionalization, in the proper circumstances and with the right leadership, can provide. Especially in the current atmosphere, when moral arguments that depend on the acceptance of timeless truths are suspect, and when racial and political explanations of some aspects of human behavior are too often accepted as explaining all of it, constant reinforcement of personal commitment is essential to produce a lasting change of behavior. Yet there are examples of street-corner religions that have become sufficiently institutional to make the initial appeals effective over a long period.

Currently, the street preachers in the cities who attract notoriety and a following that makes up in fervor for what it lacks in number are most likely to emphasize racial and political conflict. But half a century ago, a notorious New York City street preacher attracted thousands of devoted followers and established a remarkably strong institutional base with a message that was substantially apolitical, though over a period of years he collaborated informally (according to his biographers) with the Communist Party. His preaching stressed behavioral values associated with the Judeo-Christian tradition despite the fact that we must conclude that his own conduct was at best heretical, at worst blasphemous. His name was George Baker but he was more often known as Father Divine (1880?-1963). That he was literally a divinity and thus immortal was explicitly accepted as truth by his followers.

The overwhelming majority of them were black people with little education, but they included white men and women, some with college degrees and some who abandoned spouses and children to live in one of his residential "Heavens" (Divine/Baker's term). These were sexually segregated dormitories in urban centers like Harlem, Newark, and Philadelphia, acquired with funds contributed to Divine/Baker by his followers and admirers. Conditions in the Heavens were neat, clean, and cheap, and the food generous in quantity.

Divine/Baker asked in return only that the faithful turn over to him all their earnings from outside work and all their accumulated capital. Even more demanding was his insistence on rules of behavior that stressed the bourgeois virtues of sobriety, honesty, cleanliness, and reverence, as well as some norms more consistent with the patterns of extremist sects, including total sexual abstinence even for married couples and the abandonment of normal family responsibilities, such as responsibility for the upbringing of children.

During the Depression, when Divine/Baker flourished, the bargain was a good one for both sides. Divine/Baker's followers found peace and security when neither was readily attainable by black Americans. These socal goals were reached with the help of ingenious (and extremely conservative) management skills exercised by the Divine/Baker and his aides in investing contributions from the faithful and enforcing the rules.

Divine/Baker and his closest associates lived in the same buildings as other communicants, although with access to better suites of rooms, finer clothes, automobiles, servants, and, in the case of Divine/Baker himself, the services of twenty-four secretaries.

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Anyone who claims to be God, as George Baker did, and who ultimately is proven not to be, must either have been grossly misinformed by himself or others, or was from the start a self-conscious mountebank. It seems most likely that Baker belonged in the latter category, but his biographers, Sara Harris and Harriet Crittenden, who were certainly not disciples, believe that despite this egregious and fundamental flaw of insincerity, he was scrupulously honest in his financial practices. They tell readers that the Heavens were held in the name of groups of individual Angels (otherwise known as members) and none of the income inured to the taxable benefit of Divine/Baker. Despite audits of his books by the Internal Revenue Service, to which he never, according to the same sources, paid a penny in income taxes, its agents were unable to charge him with tax evasion. That at least was the case when Harris and Crittenden compiled their biography (*Father Divine: Holy Husband*, 1953).

It may appear ridiculous to waste time in searching the record for useful apologetics for Divine/Baker. To put matters mildly, and simply reject his self-atttribution of divinity as spurious, a fair-minded observer must acknowledge that he was not simply a swindler, that his influence on his followers was effective and, whatever this statement may do to common conceptions of ethical behavior, even constructive.

Drawing a majority of his followers from the worst-off of the black migrants who came north in troubled times, Divine/Baker devised a program for restoring egos shattered by a lifetime of discrimination and a new crisis of poverty. He broke the color line in living accommodations when not even the United States Army dared to try to do the same. He made each follower start a new life by taking a new home; treated each as his own direct offspring and therefore similarly touched with divinity; demanded that each live up to an exemplary code of self-denial, not only in the sexual mores that attracted widespread attention, but in commercial transactions. He resisted the argument that because people of color had been discriminated against they should be excused from observing the same scrupulous standards as the pillars of society.

A curious demonstration of effects and shortcomings of this last rule may be found in a publication regularly distributed to Divine/Baker's followers and friends. The journal contained copies of letters exchanged between members of the movement and officials of some of the nation's largest and busiest companies.

Each such exchange begins with a letter from a Divine/Baker follower to, for example, the treasurer of a major railroad. It explains that the writer, a follower of Father Divine, on a certain day some years previous, traveled between two points on the railroad without having bought a ticket. Enclosed please find a postal money order reimbursing the company for this dishonest act, sent at the behest of Father Divine himself who, characteristically, extends "best wishes for (the recipient's) health in every cell, fiber, tissue, bone, atom, molecule, and vessel of (your) bodily nature and with every wish for good health and good cheer." Then the signature of the repentant sinner.

Printed below each such letter was the response from the official to whom the original had been addressed. Dear Henry, it begins, or Dear George, or Dear Sarah, but never Dear Mr. or Miss Jones. To present-day readers, the demeaning salutation conveys a long and melancholy story. It reminds us that years would pass before white America would be prepared to recognize Negro Americans to be entitled to natural acceptance as equals, no matter how long and faithfully Negroes endeavored to conform to the code that Father Divine prescribed as opening the path to full rights.

Divine/Baker's insistence that no one could take away from the child of God what He had implanted shielded the person of color from having to notice the "Dear Henry" snubs.

That shield was the product of an extraordinary psychological device. Divine/Baker was able to inculcate patience because he promised and inflicted prompt retribution against those who wronged him or his children. His secretaries regularly revealed to the faithful that some celebrated person who had just been described in the newspapers as encountering sudden misfortune was, in fact, the most recent victim of divine retribution for a most sinister offense against Divine/Baker or his followers. The retribution list included such punishments as sudden accident or illness or even death, especially death from peculiar and mysterious offenses, often of people whose offenses had been unnoticed until retribution caught up with them and which usually continued to be unspecified. While he never quite said so himself, Divine/Baker allowed his secretaries to allow his followers to assume he had arranged the retribution personally.

Divine/Baker is of interest because his success demonstrates that thirst for a timeless set of values and an orderly life remains even—or perhaps especially—in a modern city that has dehumanized charity, proclaimed relativism, politicized religion, and seeks nightly to televise the Book of Revelation as entertainment. While the established churches criticize these tendencies, Divine/Baker offered an immediate remedy: shedding an old life and entering a Heaven. That Divine/Baker was essentially a self-conscious charlatan reflects on his character, not on the motives of those who accepted at face value his assertion of his own divinity.

Those who had occasion to observe him in the presence of his followers suggest that his assertion of divinity was the more believable for the restraint in his performance.

He did not strut or posture. When a follower stepped to the microphone in one of his banquet halls to plead

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for divine help in overcoming some painful condition or disease, Divine/Baker characteristically paid no attention; he continued to eat his dinner or to wipe a spot of gravy from the lapel of his white linen jacket. Observers who saw him often felt that had he attempted to play the part of an all-seeing, merciful divinity, the fraud would have been easy to detect, even by the most gullible of his followers.

III

To recognize the way in which a street preacher who is as wise as he is inspired can affect his contemporaries, the character of religious institutions generally, and the definition of public morality for decades to follow, one should turn to eighteenth-century Britain and the life of John Wesley. Wesley managed to combine the emotional power of the preacher outside the church with the institutional continuity of the church itself. There are signs, in the formation of new religious revivalist groups with strong institutional tendencies in today's cities, that a similar tendency is developing in the modern American city.

There is a basis for expecting a similarity between the religious movements that developed in eighteenth-century London and those that are emerging in contemporary New York. The similarity reflects striking resemblances between the two societies despite their separation in space and time. Both were troubled societies wrestling with the social and economic problems of massive change.

Eighteenth-century England was emerging from the premodern era with its traditional communal groupings in which conditions of geography, social status, religious affiliation, economic activity, and the level of education were homogeneous and rigid. In the new industrializing society, social groupings such as political parties, trade unions, common schools, fraternal organizations, and industrial corporations were just beginning to take shape. The one institution with any claim to a place in both worlds was the established church, the sole institution powerful enough to deal with social problems. Contemporary American society has now fairly exhausted the institutions that were conceived with industrialization, leaving religion (which now includes a multiplicity of separate institutions) once again alone as qualified to claim some measure of continuity extending from the past into the future. And with that continuity to claim the potentiality—not as yet fully realized—of confronting constructively the new problems of society.

Labor unions are declining in power as electronically controlled machinery takes over work formerly carried on by human workers collectively under a single roof. Broadening choice of a place to live and the incredible increase in the provision of personal mobility have undermined communities formed in the factory age, which themselves barely resembled the tightly woven small communities of the premodern world.

The word "community" continues in popular usage, but the human reality it purports to describe has been diluted until it gives off more of a nostalgic flavor than the reflection of a living reality.

Political parties have seen much of their power eclipsed by intervention of government itself in the problems of individual welfare. Fraternal organizations no longer prescribe codes of personal behavior nor do they inspire group loyalty; they have become mere social clubs.

Most important, multiplication in the number of "authorities," persons who purport to enlighten their listeners through mass communication technologies, has undermined the notion of authority altogether. Mid-rank figures—the policeman, the schoolteacher, the merchant in commercial transactions, the landlord who imposed on displaced sharecroppers the urban principle of saving money—collectively sometimes called the sergeants of society, have lost their badges of authority.

And so in the contemporary large city, religion remains practically the only institution capable of asserting moral authority, as was also the case in Britain's eighteenth century. In both locales, however, the institutionalized church lost interest generally in questions of individual moral conduct. In eighteenth-century London, the new rationalism among intellectual leaders had produced skepticism of whatever could be derided as essentially superstitious. Among the nobility, new and old, churchmen were welcomed only when they shed the gravity that was considered offensive in a social order in which wit was king. In today's New York, church leaders have grown impatient with the prospect of retailing an uncertain cure for human ills, while government claims to cure them wholesale, though hardly with greater certainty. Among the leaders of society, worship of aesthetics and nature have become triumphant ethical values, readily apparent in the victory of the church-as-architecture over the church-as-house-of-worship.

John Wesley was not the only revivalist preacher, in and out of churches, in England's eighteenth century, and by most accounts not even the most effective in rousing emotional, sometimes hysterical, response among his auditors. Yet it was he who combined religious dedication with great organizational talents and a remarkably sensitive gift for what we now call public relations. He added a rare quality of sincerity and innocence that must account for his ability to disarm even violent proletarian opponents who threatened to maim, drown, or imprison him as an agent of the Pope of Rome and an envoy of the Devil himself. Equally determined Church of England bishops and vicars, curates and laymen denounced him

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for a whole catalogue of ecclesiastical offenses against the established church, most damning of all, his excessive "enthusiasm."

Yet in the end, Wesley, a man of less than average height, a tireless traveler, something of a plagiarizer, and a proud bowdlerizer of classic works which he distributed at cut rates among his followers, a political conservative who encouraged men to become wealthy (on condition that they share their gains with the poor), a fervent, premature abolitionist who was also an opponent of the tax-resistant American colonists straining to free themselves from the mother country, founded what has become in all probability the largest single Protestant church in the world, Methodism.

Two centuries later, Methodism itself is so firmly established in its own right as a part of the Christian orthodoxy that its revolutionary achievements in the eighteenth century are all but forgotten.

When Wesley emerged from obscurity by urging his listeners to expel the Devil inside them with the help of God, his nation was shifting from agriculture to industry as its principal wealth-producing activity. The change moved villagers and peasants from the countryside in which they had lived for generations and dropped them on the streets of the big cities. In the process, it alienated hundreds of thousands from their personal and institutional affiliations and demonstrated the feebleness of their attachment to the established church. Ignorant, untrained for the work they now expected to find, desperate for relief from hunger, disease, and simple fear, they, like many of our contemporaries in modern cities, became addicted by the thousands to a new form of an old drug; in their case, alcohol, in ours, cocaine.

The development of gin—a distilled spirit that can be drunk without aging—was as devastating as the 1980s invention of crack. Gin's alcoholic content (more than 40 percent by volume as compared with less than 6 or 7 percent in fermented drinks like beer and ale) made swift, cheap response to alcohol inevitable. It created an instant market with tragic results even among women and children. By the mid-eighteenth century, there were said to be 17,000 gin shops in London in which customers could get a shot of gin for a penny, a full glass for two cents, and, for an additional penny, a straw sack on which to sleep off one's drunkenness.

With the spread of alcohol, a new, sub-proletarian class formed in London, Bristol, Liverpool, and other exploding English cities. Families disintegrated. Crime, violence, disease, and general demoralization spread. Similar migration has had similar results in our own time.

Eighteenth-century London lacked a legal method for discouraging drinking. Its crime control depended on the inculcation of terror rather than the certainty of laying hands on every offender. Hanging or lifelong overseas exile for every felon who was caught, however trivial the charge, doubtless discouraged some prospective criminals but tended to deepen the demoralization of a large part of the population. John Wesley believed that a proper religious revival would counteract the temptations of gin and crime, but that without constant reinforcement the impulse to personal reform would lapse, no matter how striking an event the original epiphany might have been.

Preaching where he could, in churches if they would permit it, outdoors if they did not, in halls or vacated buildings as his movement started to grow, Wesley concentrated his evangelical revival efforts in the growing cities—London, Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester. The itinerant preachers he trained, the circuit-riding Methodist ministers, followed.

Yet Wesley differed from other evangelical revivalists by his recognition of the necessity of developing an organization of followers, groups in every city that would be open to members of every class of society. In these groups continuing emphasis, described by one biographer as imposed with almost military severity, would be placed on living the good, the blessed life. Prohibitions were many: No drinking of spirits. No gambling. No cursing. No idle frivolity or game playing. Sexuality restricted to marriage. Reading of Scripture and of serious texts, Wesley to supply the books. No gluttony.

Much as in the case of newcomers in the modern city, displaced agricultural workers in Britain's eighteenth century left behind religious institutions, small parish churches with which they were familiar, and found themselves without churches that could serve them and their children when they reached the city. If it can fairly be said that many Protestant sects are currently turning out Mrs. Jellyby by the hundreds of thousands, trained to be more concerned with mass morality and international politics than with the condition of their families, it would be even more true to say that the established church in England in the eighteenth century was a decayed institution in which the occasional dedicated cleric was far outnumbered by political functionaries who owed their posts to influence and spent their time in avoiding religious duties.

John Wesley described his life's work in these words: "We went forth to seek that which was lost, more eminently lost, to call the most flagrant, hardened, desperate sinners to repentance. To this end we preached in the Horsefair at Bristol, in Kingswood, in Newcastle, among the colliers in Staffordshire and the tinners in Cornwall, in Southwark, Wapping, Moorfields, Drury Lane, in London. Did any man ever pick out such places as these in order to find serious, regular, well-disposed people? How many such might there be in any of them I know not. But this I know, that four in five of those who are now with us were not of that number but were wallowing in their blood; till God by us said unto them 'Live.' "

It is obvious that Wesley's work did not redeem all

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those in the British Isles who were wasting their lives for reasons which they might have been able to bring under control. But it seems clear to chroniclers of the eighteenth century that Methodism had a palpable, if unquantifiable, effect in reducing the consumption and availability of gin, in stimulating the pride of the new working class, in moderating the excesses of eighteenth-century criminal justice, in helping to reestablish a greater measure of family stability after the shocks of migration from farm to factory.

All of these changes were effectuated by a combination of the direct, immediate, and overwhelmingly emotional experience of revelation and its continuing reinforcement by the structure of a religious institution. Surely it is not inconceivable that new religious leaders will rise in the city, to echo in their own words the Wesleyan claim of having restored life to the lost and purpose to the institutions of religion. FT

Zebra

Up and down the oneway streets
of houses huddled deep and close
together, sycamores, live oaks
brace up to the concrete, break through,
their dark roots surfacing, disrupting
the order of a New Orleans neighborhood.

A block away the laughter, the games
belong to black children, confident
on a street colored their way.
With light skin and braids hanging
to my waist, I, a stranger on the block,
wander past them looking in
through the chain link fence.

Their eyes, like dark and shallow pools,
hold me caged behind that fence.
"Zebra" I hear a small voice say.
The red *bobos* laced on my feet,
that only yesterday I tested for speed,
don't move fast enough.
I am shoved to the pavement
by the boy who yelled "get her."

White children whose street we've invaded,
watch them run away, see me sitting there
untying and tying my shoes. And later,
kicking them off, I poke at the slugs
by my feet, decide not to tell
my black mother, my white father,
where I have been.

Natasha Trethewey

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Godly Cooking? Theological Ethics and Technological Society

Max L. Stackhouse

Every civilization has had its own ways of getting materials out of the bio-physical environment in order to feed, clothe, and house people, and to move people and things from where they are to where we want them to go. People with technical abilities know how to do things, how to make instruments to do things, and how to fix things when they are broken. Modernity thinks it is right to honor them and what they do.

Moreover, modernity has put both scientific truth and imagined beauty at the disposal of technique, producing the new phenomenon "technology." Technology not only changes the bio-physical world, it alters our social and historical worlds by producing ever new waves of industrial revolutions. At the same time, it changes our mental world, the ideological structures by which we understand self, community, and cosmos.

Advised by science and served by poetic imagination, modern technological competence brings greater and greater capabilities of altering nature, history, human consciousness, and indeed, technology itself. We now have more organized means by which to induce intentional change in geometric increments than humanity has ever known. Insofar as technology is successful, it liberates us to do what we want to do.

To be sure, there are limits. One of these limits is functional. Everything in technology has to pass the "ergonomic" test, that is, it has to work, measurably. But the quest for efficiency is after all part of what technology is about. A second limit is ignorance. We do not know how to do a great many things. But we both seek to overcome that ignorance as quickly as possible, and to do everything that we already know how to do. A third limit is said by many people to be that of sheer survival: We could so alter the world that it might no longer sustain us. Indeed, the prophets of ecological disaster or nuclear winter say we have already begun to trespass this limit. But others say that the survival of the planet is not a limiting issue: We could simply decide to use the earth to establish colonies on other planets and thus populate the galaxy.

Whether one is an apocalyptic or a utopian, the deeper point is that nothing either in malleable nature or in history, nothing in human nature or in ideology could, in principle, limit our attempts precisely to break these limits, since technology is nothing less than the *praxis* by which we have learned how to free ourselves from the constraints of nature, human nature, history, and ideology, so as to transform them according to our will.

The new liberation brought by technology poses an old ethical problem: the peril of freedom without norm. Many of the greatest theological thinkers of recent centuries have predicted the triumph of "rationalization," "modernization," and "secularization," expecting a Faustian triumph of uncontrolled hubris, an erosion of human dignity, an assault on all things normative, and a contempt for all things theological. In opposition, a number of scientists have hinted that Promethean humanity might now escape the confines of myth-imposed chains and pains, storm the heavens, seize control of its own destiny and drive all irrational spiritualities back into the preconscious dungeons of the primitive mind, whence they came

MAX L. STACKHOUSE *is the Herbert Gezork Professor of Christian Social Ethics at Andover Newton Theological School.*

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and where, if anywhere, they belong. Such debates were couched in discussions of the relationship of faith to reason, or religion to science, either of which saw a great opposition, tension, and battle between two arenas of life and thought—"history" and "nature."

Many of these debates remain alive, but technology has set them onto new ground. For technology is not in any simple sense reason or science or nature any more than it is machines or bombs or pills or computers. It is rather a *praxis* guided by a metaphysical-moral vision that tells us that we can and should figure out how things work in order to make them work the way we think they *ought* to work. And this little word "ought" suggests the issue. Here we see why technology is important to ethics and ethics to technology.

II

Some time ago, the French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss published a famous study called *The Raw and the Cooked* (1969). One aspect of his argument is of particular interest here. Among the primal cultures he studied, Levi-Strauss found myths, rituals, and grammars that tell us that certain natural resources are there for cooking. Things properly cooked are "civilized" and fit for human use; things uncooked or improperly cooked are "savage" and unfit. This is a refinement of James Frazer's work on feasts, William Robertson-Smith's analysis of sacrifice, N. D. Fustel de Coulange's interpretation of the hearth; and it supports in considerable measure Max Weber's view of "commensalism" (especially in the Mass) and Mary Douglas' theory of "purity" with regard to food. Scholars will continue to debate these works, but what they all point to is that there has been and continues to be a vast process of transforming the bio-physical universe into that which can sustain life. They also show that that process inevitably takes place under the guidance of ethical and/or religious principles of discernment. "Ought" is built into the process.

Cooking requires the human use and control of fire. Fire is, we might say, superhuman—at once dangerous, potent, and necessary. It can destroy what it reconstructs; it can consume what it refines. Without it, humans regress to barbarous subsistence; with it, civilization becomes a possibility. But cooking with fire is not in itself divine; it requires a metaphysical-moral meaning beyond its own functionality—a meaning, in other words, beyond the physical facts of the matter, one at least believed to be beyond historical construction, a meaning that *defines* what is ethical, what is properly fitting to human society. Here we can see the importance of norm-laden ritual: the pagan raw is transubstantiated into the civilized cooked; the authentic human community is defined. Here ritual guards sacred meaning as nature, history, and ideology cannot do. Serious cooking must, in short, be "kosher."

Today, for us, all resources have become cookable—in principle if not yet in fact. Virtually nothing is excluded from what can be transformed into a consumable product for human use. Indeed, not only nature, but many aspects of the social order—insofar as they can be engineered, planned, and transformed by the intentional designs of technological effort—can be cooked. The city is a cooked village; the factory is a complex oven, its products the cooked resources of mine and field; the corporation is an organized assembly of cooks; the news is cooked gossip; the shopping mall is cooked swapping; the university, the law court, the laboratory, all serve to facilitate cooking.

We in the modern world recognize no less than the ancients that "cooking" is necessary for human sustenance. Many modern philosophers and social scientists, however, are in doubt that sacred ritual or mythic content is or should be attached to it. Indeed, one of the things that most divides us from our forebears is our belief that the process of transformation from the raw to the cooked, *and the norms by which this transformation is guided*, are themselves human construals: we cook them up, too.

John Staudenmaier's analysis of the content of the last quarter-century of the journal *Technology and Culture* is very revealing in this regard. He finds technology deeply intertwined with education, with the dominant dynamics of both industry and politics, as well as with the arts, medicine, law, and morality—all those elements that taken together are what we mean by the word "culture."

Technology thus cannot be understood merely by reference to such things as engineering or mechanics or new forms of know-how. Technology involves the relationship of expected change to insight, to the support network that encourages innovation, and to the thought systems by which new methods are imagined, analyzed, revised, tested, made available to the public, and subsequently adopted by it. The *praxis* of technology does not stand by itself any more than the ancient methods of cooking dinner stood by themselves.

Each step in the course of technological change involves its implication in a distinctive "cognitive universe" that is prior to any specific technology. That is, it requires a set of metaphysical-moral presumptions of which its practitioners may not even be conscious. For instance, technologists tend to think of nature as an orderly, but not a closed, system; it is thus a system very much open to manipulation. They endorse novelty wrought by human creativity, and they value such activities as the use of science as a tool, invention, and the allocation of capital for efforts to transform nature—in short, ways of seeking new possibilities that might well change both the course of society and the logic of human understanding.

Such presumptions, of course, are not "natural."

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Indeed, only in a cognitive universe where people are culturally fluent in this way can technology perpetuate itself. Wherever its underlying presuppositions are, intentionally or unintentionally, hidden from consciousness, technological transfer will be inhibited. In other words, technology is dependent on culture, not the other way around.

Technology is thus the embodiment of a particular symbolic rendering of what it means to be human, one in keeping with a kind of literacy for which many have forgotten the *raison d'être*. Natan Setiabudi of Indonesia has pointed out that many who want the fruits of technology adopt it without realizing that it carries with it bio-physical, socio-political, symbolic-cultural and finally also religious and ethical assumptions of which they are not aware. Were they aware, they might not approve.

III

Which brings us to the question of the ethical character and specific moral content of the technological subjection of nature and history to human will. The answer seems quite obvious and simple. Two moral qualities are present in all serious technology: freedom and efficiency.

The freedom inherent in technology is that which reduces the degree to which humans must passively depend on the givens of the bio-physical order. In the more highly developed societies, neither work nor the conditions under which people work is determined by "nature." Daily schedules, for example, are less and less determined by daylight. Communication is no longer bound by time or space. Diseases that were debilitating or fatal are increasingly subject to treatment or control. The peoples, customs, cultures, and religions of the world are more readily accessible, as are whole new ranges of foods, ideas, products, and life-styles. On every side, new freedoms explode.

Such freedoms, however, themselves depend above all upon access to the necessary cognitive universe. Those who either resist or are for one reason or another barred from the technological vision get confined on a kind of intellectual, social, and economic reservation. Thus, the elders of many societies, who recognize that the accession of technological freedoms means an exodus from the ontocratic traditions which they see as "natural," increasingly find themselves ignored by the youth who want these new forms of freedom.

As for efficiency, it is a virtue of technology, in some sense even prior to freedom. For after all, much of this freedom derives from the reduction of drudgery. With mechanical and electronic labor, humans are less and less definable simply as beasts of burden. Efficiency also means the reduction of waste: the greater the technological control of the environment, the less waste there will be. When oil became more costly, for example, technology was able to squeeze nearly 40 percent more energy out of each barrel of oil. And there is much evidence to suggest that big logging companies and agribusinesses gain higher yield per acre and enhance a longer-range viability of the land than small extraction operations and family farms—although these facts often conflict with widely held social values.

Freedom and efficiency, however, are not ultimate but only penultimate values. Freedom is a necessary precondition for, but not in itself the substance of, living rightly or well. The capacity to transcend the constraints of circumstance and bio-physical determinism and the ability to overcome given limitations of time and space are necessary ingredients of human society; but one thing they cannot do for us is tell us how we ought to use our freedom. Indeed, as we know, the freedom brought by technology is often used precisely to violate human rights, to constrict for some what it enhances for others, as well as to construct instruments of destruction.

Nor can freedom be guided by efficiency. As with most virtues, we learn little of substance from efficiency without an additional normative reference. It is a good thing to be faithful, hopeful, and loving—if, that is, what we have faith in, hope for, and love is valid. So with efficiency. We can be as efficiently evil as good, for what it governs is means, not ends. It does not contain its own *telos*. In the service of ethically defined ends such as housing the homeless, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, defending the innocent, or seeking wisdom, the virtue of technology finds a fuller expression. Such ends, however, depend on principles of justice that are extrinsic to technology, on a social analysis of ordering discernment as to what the human community needs, and on a theological vision that tells us which felt needs *ought* to be met so that the order we create may accord with ultimate truth.

In brief, technology's freedom and efficiency require an ethic beyond technology's own virtues. In fact, I propose that it needs a Christian Social Ethic—one concerned with this question: How does God want us to live together in the world?

Many people would no doubt agree that a social ethic is necessary: but a *Christian* social ethic? Is theology required? Many might hold the position that while technology does indeed require a sense of normative order beyond itself, societies based on an intimate connection between freedom, efficiency, and a pattern of disciplined *cultural* norms may be enough. Surely, they might say, the discipline that guides freedom and efficiency need not be linked to or derived from Christianity; it might just as easily be guided by a philosophical humanism, or Judaism, or Confucianism, or, as seems to be the case in Japan, a "Samurai work ethic."

But this issue needs to be disaggregated. First, there is the question of whether technology requires a social ethic extrinsic to itself; second, whether that social

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ethic must be religious in character, or whether a cultural or philosophical discipline will suffice; third, whether, if a religious or cultural dimension of discipline to guide freedom is required, it needs for any reason to be specifically Christian.

IV

In taking up these issues, it is useful first to remind ourselves that what we often think about as "natural" is what has become "second nature" by technological, social, and cultural convention. Historical or sociological analysis reveals that much that appears to us firmly planted in the structure of the cosmos is in fact artifactual. This is one of the findings of modern philosophy that has caused great consternation among those devoted to certain classical forms of "natural philosophy." The standards of justice drawn from what is "natural" in this sense of the term are altered in keeping with historical transformations. What our forebears willed, in other words, has become "second nature" to us.

The widely held view of nature as the most comprehensive category of all that can be known has long been challenged by theology. The doctrine of Creation puts all of nature in a larger context and sees it as artifact. Now that view is being challenged more concretely by technology—in part because, as will be later suggested, technology manifests a peculiar theological dependence. For the moment, however, it is enough to suggest that if we appeal to nature as the most comprehensive reality, we would have to say that human nature is a part of the whole. And we would soon have to note that human nature is constituted so as to cook things—otherwise we could not account for the fact that that is what we always do.

Cooking and worship are two decisive activities that distinguish men from the beasts. Perhaps ironically, those who appeal to nature most vigorously have wished to stand human nature on its head, maintaining that we should not cook things without constraint, that raw nature is more primal and thus more to be honored—even, for some, worshipped—since that is the source of our basic understandings of justice. But humans cook by nature: there does not seem to be any reason in nature why the cooks should be constrained by the cooked.

Several of the modern thinkers who most clearly perceived the increasingly pervasive character of technology—who saw its systemic challenge to the sovereignty of that "nature" that they took to be both the source and norm of justice—have been led to new forms of neo-pagan romanticism. They have been eager to overcome "artificiality," to reverse "modernization," to slay the dragons who thought that life should be guided by anything "supra-natural." Within this view is a denial of a theological ethic: the justice that should guide technology derives from the way things "naturally" are.

This neo-pagan romanticism is the source of various forms of the drive to repudiate modernity and civilization and reestablish raw nature, raw justice. Not a few social theorists, among them even some theologians, have adopted these tendencies. Yet these are precisely the trends that have brought about the least humane application of technology's freedom and efficiency in modern history.

No one doubts that many of the uses of technology have been disruptive of the bio-physical universe. Ecological balances have been threatened, and further disregard for the intricacies of the biosphere is stupid. It is also clear to many that various forms of work under the dispensation of technology have been exploitative and dehumanizing—persons and whole groups have been deprived of their dignity, their self-sufficiency, their cultural identity. Some of the most important social movements today want to protect the environment for humane purposes and expand the human capacity to see beauty in the wonder of creation. But the very use of such terms as "stupid," "exploitative," and "dehumanizing" implies a moral judgment about the relationship between nature and humanity that is not rooted in how things *are*, but in a theory of how life *ought* to be.

Many romantics believed they had hit on a way for religious sensibilities to reassert themselves in alliance with nature and with the intuitive and organic aspects of human nature. In this way they would reclaim primal communal patterns and authentic primal wisdom and displace the cold, artificial rationalism of science. Wholistic spirituality, it was held, would restore religion, banishing rationalistic, objective, mechanical, and nomothetic realities. At the same time communal solidarity would take unto itself the vital, the subjective, and the unique. This romantic aspiration took several forms.

1. Martin Heidegger, like his predecessors among the German Romantic poets and his anguished forerunner Nietzsche, believed that an "onto-theological" view lay behind the human attempt to develop modern technology. Indeed, this was the source of the "illusion" that humans ought to have dominion over what is truly natural. In this view, Being, conceived as form, is distinguished from vital Existence. Existence, then, is made to fit the mold of Being, abstractly conceived. In fact, he argued, Being and Existence ought not be distinguished; but because they are, the thought of Being as it is present to us in direct encounter is effaced. It would be better, as Lisa Campolo has also recently argued, if we simply abandoned technology for poetry and allowed what is already in Being to be disclosed. This would invite us to become "responsive and contemplative" rather than "domineering and challenging."

The matter has been and will probably continue to be hotly debated, but it seems quite probable that it was this philosophy that led Heidegger (and many

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less brilliant philosophers) to embrace National Socialism. Thomas Sheehan has recently pointed out that Heidegger anticipated a host of lesser lights in thinking that the West was experiencing the exhaustion of the Platonic-Christian tradition of meaning and was stumbling into the dark night of a global technology. Against this, he saw philosophically, in the ancient pre-Socratics, and politically, in the contemporary Nazi movement, a celebration of the mysterious and spontaneous vitalities that rise out of the unique historicity and spirituality of a particular people. These, he held, were much more "concrete," "unified," and "natural" than anything metaphysical, dualistic, or transcendent.

The Heideggerian movement spoke of the spontaneities of "genius" and not of form or pattern or norm, of particular and concrete relationships and events and not of universal or abstract principles. Thus, technology was rejected—except as an instrument of a *Volk* freely expressing its own spiritual "mystery of Being" and overcoming onto-theo-logical abstractions. The currently much-celebrated debates about deconstruction began with the efficient and free deconstruction of humans and civility on the basis of this repudiation of the abstractions of norm and principle in the name of what is "wholistic" and "natural."

2. To be sure, fascism is not the only form of romanticism. Marxism, although closer in many ways to the Enlightenment, has a similar, albeit more subtle, dimension. In spite of Marxism's recent political collapse, it remains today the leading form of anti-intellectualism to have gained its influence by taking on the guise of science. Its primary impulse derives from the existential will of the proletariat, which, Marxists claim, is purified of false consciousness by suffering, and thus can undertake the effort to reconstruct the world in its own image without illusion and with technology as its tool.

Theory and reality, of course, are far apart. As the Belgian theologian Jean Ladriere pointed out some time ago, Marxism preserves its romantic attraction for many not because it is intellectually compelling (it is not), nor because it brings a new actualization of justice (it does not), nor because it is fully in accord with the class interests of those who are supposed to be helped by it (they are frequently the most cynical about it). Rather, minority elites take it up because they want to change the course of history and think that it is efficacious. That is, Marxism is viewed as an ideational technology that will allow these elites to realize their version of "the people's will."

Compared to fascism, Marxism is ethically to be preferred for the simple reason that it does have a universalistic element. It does not have only a national or a racial moral horizon, but a human, rational one—at least, in principle. However, its romantic impulse takes the form of a sense of solidarity that has tended to subvert its own humanism. That is, it believes that what is human can be reconstructed because humans are, finally, nothing more than, as Marx said, "an ensemble of social relations." And the new humanity can be built by the reorganization of the means of production and reproduction—that is, by technology, by the reordering of the relationship of human collective life to the bio-physical realm. But, of course, something has to guide the reorganization of the means of production. And that is the vital will as it emerges in particular contexts of history.

Efforts to reconstruct Marxism are now taking place everywhere around the world, based on the recognition both that Marxism has not worked in practice as it claimed to in theory, and that its concentration of power at the center has produced terrible injustice. In other words, it has not sustained efficiency and freedom, and its vision of justice has faltered because it is not attached to a metaphysical-moral vision capable of guiding the liberation it ostensibly intends.

3. The presumptions of fascist naturalism as well as those of Marxist monism have been defeated in many ways. Yet in recent decades they have also recombined in a most interesting way to produce an energetic new challenge to theology. This recombination can be found in a number of the new "Creation Theologies," as, for example, in Jean Houston's "Prometheus Rebound: An Inquiry into Technological Growth and Psychological Change":

> The origins of the problem of technological growth . . . lie deep in the western psyche, and specifically in its religious roots. In the first chapter of Genesis, God is not consonant with His Creation. It is a "handiwork" which He declares "Good." In many other myths and scriptures of the beginning time, the god is implicit in the creation, is often indistinguishable from it. . . . In the Judeo-Christian story there is an immediate distancing between Creator and creation, an I-it objectification of reality. . . . And the being created in the image of God, man, is similarly authorized to be dominant and removed from the sub-human world.

This elevation of man, it is regularly alleged in the *Whole Earth Papers*, the writings of Matthew Fox, and a vast number of feminist articles and books, has led to a will to dominance over the earth, over other humans, other religions, and other cultures. Which is to say, the popular synthesis of selected themes from fascism and Marxism has become the new monistic orthodoxy of anti-theological criticism. These days this synthesis is sometimes called "spirituality"; it gives spirituality a bad name.

4. It is a fourth form of romanticism, however, with which we must struggle most directly in the attempt to understand technology as we look toward the

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twenty-first century. This is the one that, comparatively speaking, has worked most efficiently and produced the greatest amount of freedom, even if our assessment of it in terms of justice must remain suspended. This is the form that has triumphed in countries where Christianity has resisted fascism, Communism, and neo-pagan spiritualities, and where Christianity—perhaps especially in its Protestant forms—seems to have given some impetus to the development of modern, Western, capitalist society. Indeed, this is the one against which "Creation Spirituality"—and its dying forebears—rails most energetically, even as it is being exported to the whole world most energetically.

This is the kind of romanticism identified by Colin Campbell in his remarkable *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Consumerism* (1987). Campbell has refined Weber's famous study of some of the forces shaping modern *production* to show that the modern, Western form of romanticism is fixated not on the genius of a "people" (as happened in fascism) nor on the will of a class (as happened in Marxism) but on the feelings of the individual. This has revolutionized *consumption*, and the cumulative effects of individualistic consumption are what have fueled the disciplined, cooperative technology of production—which, once revolutionized, has in turn cooked up more and more for consumption. Catering to the sovereignty of individual feeling has generated the kinds of advertising that helps people first to define what they want, and then gives them what they have defined. This is the same impulse that gave rise to mass evangelism on the one hand and to media politics on the other.

In the face of *this* concretion of the romantic impulse, not only do products find validity—but reason, science, community, traditions, art, marriage, and religiosity do so as well when they stimulate, then satisfy, ever anew, individual feelings on a mass scale. Everything that does not accomplish this is to be altered or abandoned, and the chief tool for alteration, for deconstruction of the old and reconstruction of the new, is technology. (In such a context, it is no wonder that the drug problem has become so serious. It is the quickest way for the individual to get a consumable technical fix for pain and insecurity.)

How attractive these forms of romanticism all seem; how vicious they all turn out to be when socially actualized. And this is because the various romanticisms deny, in their various ways, that an onto-theological reality is, or should be, something other than pure existence and that our wills and feelings should be subject to something beyond themselves. No extrinsic norm is accepted; hence technology is no more than an efficient means of freedom.

Modern social developments dramatically reveal that we cannot find the decisive principles of justice by calling for a return to nature. The advent of modern technology has reminded us that we were long ago expelled from that garden of innocence, and the social forms that develop on the basis of a love of "raw justice" become more perilous than those which they resist. Moreover, our primal capacity to recognize good and evil, to distinguish right from wrong, requires that we repudiate naturalism in all its pernicious forms. Indeed, that primal moral capacity suggests that morality itself is not so much "natural" as a gift of grace. Indeed, the analysis of our situation thus far points toward a demand for a divine source for the root beyond nature of both nature and the *justitia originalis* by which we may be called upon to alter nature through the use of technology. Indeed, it is by analysis of the social and ethical dimensions of technology that we are led to the brink of theology.

Do we then have a license to cook the world, and, if so, do we have any recipe for doing so?

At the root of this question is the fundamental issue of whether we shall refer to the way things are as "Nature" or "Creation" and whether what we are referring to is, in either case, perfect or defective. A basic claim of the biblical traditions is that nature is not, in any permanent sense, the most reliable guide to morality, social order, or meaning. Nature is actually Creation—that is, an artifactual reality, a temporal, historical existent made by a power and with a purpose greater than it. Nature is thus dependent on a Creator. The impersonal is dependent on the personal, and is therefore subject to intervention, change, and intentional reconstruction by agents of the Creator. Nature is not the most comprehensive category that humans can conceive, and perhaps to think so is simply a superficial reflection of the fact that we have not yet penetrated to the source of its being or the norm of its character.

To be sure, many of the available concepts of "Creator" seem so arbitrary or so obscurantist as to offend all decent notions of justice or truth. But then we must again make a distinction between Nature as the primary, potentially normative, structures of Being—of which traces appear in Existence—and those natural structures in Existence that have largely departed from the normative structures of Being. In any case, we have to think, against romanticisms ancient and modern, of a dualism—one that can account for the ability, and the felt obligation, of humans to know that much of what is "natural" is not normative and not only may be but ought to be reconstructed on the basis of a supra-natural norm extrinsic to it.

This puts a whole different light on the matter, for then we can recognize that when we say that "the world is created good" we are dealing with two categories that are not necessarily the same, that the goodness is extrinsic to the way nature appears to us. The created world, as it appears to us, is not the final authority in regard to its own quality. We can recognize defect in the way something is constituted and not take things

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as they are to be normative. Where the created world is genuinely good, it is still not holy, not perfect, and it is thus subject to improvement. The created order may, to be sure, always have traces of the Creator's intent and primal structure in it. Some ancients argued compellingly for a universal *vestigia trinitatis*; more spoke of an *imago dei*, so that each existing reality has the capacity both to be and to be transformed, even if the *vestigium* is not the Trinity and the image is not God. No concretely existent thing is, in itself, perfect, moral, ethical, divine, or whole. In the face of divine reality, it may be altered.

We can now also see why it makes sense to speak of *Christian* Social Ethics. Ethical aspects of an enormously pervasive social phenomenon in modernity—i.e., technology—require a normative grounding in dimensions of reality that transcend both social realities and natural justice. We are at least invited to inquire as to whether theology can supply us with a more reliable basis for life in a modern, technological, increasingly global civilization.

In this connection, the Christian claim about the Fall may well be of great consequence in this public domain of technology. All that is created—human existence in relation to nature and society—has not followed the original design, but has turned in upon itself and celebrated its own existence as sufficient unto itself. It may be free to do what it wills, efficiently, or to will a resistance to freedom and efficiency, but the will by which either is chosen is itself self-centered, fallen, broken, incomplete, and therefore unreliable. We would be most foolish if we attempted to follow its fragmented "natural" patterns in economics, family life, religion, morality, philosophy, or even, as we can now dramatically see, in technology. Thus humans have a positive obligation both to confess our sins with regard to our treatment of creation, but also to engage in the reconstruction of nature—to bring it into the kind of harmonious integrity that was intended from the start, but from which it (of which we are a part) has fallen. Such a view suggests the need for a "sacramental" view of nature.

Modern technology was born from such presuppositions. Lynn White, Jr. was nearly correct more than two decades ago when he argued that "technology is at least partly to be explained as an occidental, voluntarist realization of the Christian dogma of man's transcendence of and rightful mastery over nature. . . . The present increasing disruption of the global environment is the product of a dynamic technology and science which were originating in the Western medieval world against which Saint Francis was rebelling in so original a way. . . ." White continued: "Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious." ("The Historical Roots of our Ecologic Crisis," *Science*, March, 1967)

White, like the romantics, was correct in that he saw that theological issues are the basic ones; but he was only partly correct, because he was confused about the nature of nature. He did not see it as Creation, or as in need of active and sacramental reconstruction because of the Fall. He thought that St. Francis' love of the birds and beasts could become a symbol of the cultural constraint of technology. But he also thought that religion was a part of culture and that it could be redesigned by an exercise of imaginative will. In other words, lurking in the bowels of his argument White had a technological view of both culture and religion. His view was quickly taken up by a multitude of religious-ecological buffs in the name of protecting nature. Not many recognized that they had, in fact, abandoned the idea of Creation. Fewer still recognized that the reconstruction of nature was necessarily linked to Sacrament because of the Fall, which was Francis' inspiration (as the contemporary French composer, Olivier Messiaen, has so wonderfully shown in his inspired opera, "The Life of St. Francis"). White, in short, did not yet have a theological view of the matter, and seduced many away from one in what is also finally an anti-technological direction. His theological followers thought that we had to choose between "cooking" and "Godliness."

White's error—and of course not his alone—was that he did not grasp that when nature, society, and humanity are seen under the aspect of the Creator, and treated sacramentally, technology is a more or less successful manifestation of humanity's mandate to liberate the human spirit, and to reconstruct what is distorted or incomplete in nature in order to more nearly approximate the laws, purposes, and mercies of God. That is, he did not see that technology can be a potentially grace-filled instrument of concrete salvation; that it can conduce to "the city that has foundations, whose maker and builder is God," and whose servants any creatures using technology with this vision may be. Nor did he see that it is the loss of this orientation that has made technology available to pagan spiritual forces—with their nihilistic racism, classism, monism, and consumerism. It is quite possible that certain theological battles within Christianity itself helped to distort modern understandings about what may be more just, and more related to truth and ordering discernment, than we have yet recognized.

All Christians believe in Creation and Fall; but the decisive questions that have divided Catholics and Protestants have to do with how much fell in the Fall, how far all that did fall fell, and what best cures the fallen. Characteristically, Catholics have tended to say that the supernatural graces were lost in the Fall, but that nature remains intact—although imperfect because of its separation from that which should properly complete it. In this way Catholics have continued to rely on natural law as known by natural reason, but as supplemented and guided by sacramen-

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tal fidelity that can restore the supernatural graces.

Protestants opposed this view on three grounds. First, it seemed to imply a Pelagian tendency in the understanding of reason and natural law. It had no need of grace at the basic level of human moral understanding, and where it did need grace, it turned guidance over to a magisterium that seemed no more filled with supernatural grace than anyone else. Second, it seemed to manifest an intellectual arrogance—a knowledge about how nature actually works beyond what the natural sciences could confirm. And third, it seemed to make the sacraments into an infusion of grace, on command. So, in turn, Protestants developed their own theories: of "utter depravity" to guard against Pelagian tendencies, of "common grace" to assure that everyone knew that the "reason" of *justitia originalis* was less a natural human possession than a divine gift, and of communion as a "remembrance" to avoid any hint of magic.

Recent ecumenical efforts suggest that the intensity of these battles may be over, and that convergence on these points with aspects of Eastern Orthodoxy is also conceivable. We have seen that the distance between the "graced reason" of the Catholics and the "common grace" of the Protestants turns out, in practice, to be not very great—at least as those concepts bear on issues of social justice. But that convergence is related to a more consequential convergence regarding sacramentality. No longer can questions of ethics, questions of modern social *praxis*, and questions of theology be neatly segregated. Presumptions and implications of each bear on the practice of the others.

"Sacramentality," it is increasingly recognized, involves receiving what is given in "nature" as a gift, even if it is known to be broken and fallen, assuming stewardly responsibility for the nurture of that gift on the basis of the intentions of the Creator so far as we can know them. That nurture involves the transformation of what is natural so that it becomes fit for human fulfillment and the common good in a universalistic community. Thus, the "grain of the earth" and the "fruits of the vine" are "transformed by human hands" and lifted up as an "offering unto the Lord," and then distributed to the people to sustain them in this life and orient them toward the future.

All this is to be undertaken under a discipline of ethical self-examination, confession, repentance, and a joyful sharing with others in loving mutuality. It is to be joined to the preaching of Truth and the enactment of Justice in society as a matter of sacrificial vocation.

What remains is the recasting of the norms from these classical, radical, and increasingly recovered sacramental themes for the guidance of technology. This is especially pertinent to technology as a ministry of the laity, as a diaconal service of the whole people of God in the whole creation, and as the symbolic guidance system for a *praxis* that has lost its theological rootage and hence tends to serve interests that, also often without theological-ethical foundations, become demonic in their employment of technology's freedom and efficiency.

The basic theological issues of technology today then become clear. At the hands of Godless social science, or of theology disengaged from and opposed to the decisive *praxis* of modernity, or of the romantic naturalism of modern neo-pagans, technology loses contact with its own deepest source and norm. It thereby fractures justice, dividing freedom from norm and separating means from end; it is seduced into selling its ethical principles to causes of oppression and confusion. This happens whenever an untrue or unjust metaphysical-moral vision defines its duties.

A sacramental view of technology has thus a great deal to do with what it takes to live when we transform and share natural resources. The primitive mythic division of the world into the raw and the cooked came close to it. The commandments for keeping "kosher" did have it, but did not fully see the universal implications of their own deeper meaning. In the Eucharist, however, the meaning is universalized in principle for all peoples and for all parts of creation: We are to overcome all naturalisms and all merely secular views of societal will in favor of a justice based in onto-theo-logical norms to guide freedom; and we are to overcome all romantic (and, especially, in our domestic situation, consumeristic) employments of technology that deconstruct these normative meanings. Sacramentality is Godly cooking.

On these foundations, we may utilize technology, train the next generation in it, honor those whose vocation it is, share its fruits with the dispossessed for their empowerment, and make it humanly accessible to all in the ecumenical, cosmopolitan city now under construction. Indeed, we may thank God that the blessings as well as the sins of the fathers are visited unto the children for many generations. These blessings now need to be recovered and recast so that they can reclaim their normative status for the decisive *praxis* of modernity.

Of course, to do this, we shall have to convert a world that has forgotten whence its technology derived and to convert those theologies that have forgotten the significance of what they are about. We shall have to make the case that it makes sense to speak of God and sacramentality in such matters, and that we can do so with enough reliability to guide and direct our reconstruction of nature, society, and aspects of human nature.

This, I believe, is among the most important dimensions of the vocation of theologians, ethicists, and social analysts who wish to speak to a technological age. Clarifying the basis for Godly cooking may help guide modernity's preparations for the eschatological banquet in the world without apocalyptic self-destruction. FT

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The Decline and Fall of the Christian College (II)

James Tunstead Burtchaell

The first part of this essay, published in last month's issue, recounted how the process of estrangement between Vanderbilt University and the Southern Methodist Church was typical of the alienation of mainstream Protestant colleges and universities from their churches, occurring from about 1870 to 1910. Educators who anticipated that churchmen might use their leverage to obstruct rather than encourage their plans for academic reform withdrew their colleges and universities from ecclesiastical governance. Deploring "sectarian" narrowness, they bound their campuses' intellectual and disciplinary life to a generic Christianity rather than to any actual church. A new generation of faculty, with neither commitment to nor interest in joining a community of faith, brought their institutions into a new secular obedience. It was noted, finally, that the initiatives which assured the swift secularization of these campuses were undertaken by educators who were themselves observant believers who failed to foresee that the academy had no way to remain Christian without vital membership in an ecclesiastical fellowship.

If the Vanderbilt transition from Methodist to neuter exhibits a typical pattern of academic secularization, what we will find at the root of these events is a sponsoring church that is nonchalant about its burden: one that wishes to be the patron of a college or university without being its benefactor. Usually the officers of the churches involved in the process outlined above included few persons who had benefitted by advanced studies or were intellectuals. Deprived of native sympathy for academics and of a sense of ease in dealing with them—indeed, inclined to view them with misgiving—these ecclesiastics did not by instinct address themselves to their institutions in their office as articulate exponents of their faith, nor as pastors, nor as prophets. They fell back upon the only role remaining: that of governors.

Facing these sponsors was usually an institution with the possibility and the determination to become more rigorous in its standards and more ambitious in its financial requirements. Because it lacked a sure sense of authentic advantage in being the undertaking of a community of faith, it tended to look uncritically to the best-financed institutions as its models, and these invariably were secular or secularized.

The alienation usually required, as well, an academic administrator whose determination to transfigure the institution and whose ego (if these be not synonymous) inclined him to neutralize all potential rivals to his leadership. Typically the board of trustees was reconfigured to follow administrative leadership without let or hindrance, the faculty was tamed with increased emoluments and funds for scholarship, and the donors and public were won over by a rhetoric of assurance. The only threat remaining resided within the church. Because the church's members, by and large, were not so impressed by higher education that they were ready to subsidize or even abide it when it became too outspoken and critical, and because its officers sensed no competence in themselves to interact with academics save from a position of control, the administrator sensed rightly that the church held the latent power to bring down everything he was striving to build up. Church affiliation became, in a word, not worth the risk.

JAMES T. BURTCHAELL, C.S.C., *a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of* FIRST THINGS, *is Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame.*

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Whatever the drive for power on the part of the institution and its academic leadership, the desire to be free of the church was usually motivated by the belief that the Christian context and spiritual nourishment they regarded as a blessing could and would continue after the removal of any authoritative link with the church. The widely shared church membership and piety of the campus population led them to suppose that the inertial force of faith is such that it would carry them along after their relationship to the church became informal and inexplicit rather than legal. Or, to put it another way, those who negotiated the withdrawal imagined the campus (or the culture) as a sort of autocephalous church.

Yet at the same time that these institutions asserted their readiness to remove themselves from church oversight and still remain a community of faith, they proved unwilling to undertake any of the essential tasks that a community of faith must perform in order to thrive or survive: the defining of authentic faith in seasons of dispute; the maintenance of moral discipline on standards grounded in faith; the invitation to communion and its withdrawal; concern for the personal welfare of its members beyond professional performance. The reformed institutions never had the principled nerve to make good on their claim that in asserting their independence they would nonetheless retain their character as Christian communities.

Not that religious trappings disappeared from campuses overnight or altogether. Vestiges of religion remained in the liberal Protestant institutions well after the completion of the secularization process in the first decade of this century. The capacity of religious identity to linger in confused and ambiguous observance and symbol allows strange and sometimes awkward outcroppings of "religion as heritage." Perhaps a few contemporary examples of this phenomenon will illustrate the point.

Ten years ago one originally Protestant university made the following announcement:

> Those attending today's Opening Exercises in the University Chapel will notice several subtle but significant changes in the traditional ceremony marking the start of the academic year. Perhaps most obvious, the time of the program has moved from 11:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M., so as not to conflict with the chapel's regular religious service.
>
> The substance of the program has also been modified to make it less ostensibly "religious" in a denominational sense while retaining its underlying spirituality. For example, such traditional parts of a religious service as doxology, Lord's Prayer, benediction, and offering have been eliminated. At the same time, the nondenominational prayer and responsive reading have been retained, and the musical program has been enhanced with inclusion of the University Glee Club and instrumental Ensemble in addition to the chapel choir. The changes, according to the Associate University secretary, are consistent with the recent trustee report analyzing the role of the chapel and of the dean of the chapel. In planning this year's opening exercises we have tried to emphasize the spiritual and intellectual diversity of *A*_____ University. We think we have developed an imaginative program that embodies the important spiritual traditions of *A*_____ while recognizing its diversity.

An alumnus of another distinguished former Protestant institution wrote a letter recently to the alumni magazine:

> It appears from the photograph of *V*_____ Chapel . . . that the chapel "restoration" has stripped the chancel of its specificity of religious symbolism. When I was first a student at the University, the Chapel represented a vision of Christian ecumenism. The Gothic architecture and the *via media* Protestant liturgy, the cross and altar beneath the reredos, expressed a generalized, yet specific, religious and cultural heritage, that of a reformed Western Christendom. Later, the liturgical movement of the Roman Catholic Church spilled over into the ecumenical Christian scene and the altar of *V*_____ Chapel was reoriented. The most recent alteration no doubt represents an adjustment to a cultural setting that is on the one hand more religiously pluralistic and on the other more pervasively secularistic. . . .
>
> A worthy vision, symbolized by the *V*_____ Chapel chancel of a past generation, has departed. I do not think it can, or should, be restored, nor even lamented. We require a new and wider ecumenism in religion and a new and wider humanism in education. I cherish a time when every University of *B*_____ alumnus will have contemplated not only Greek philosophy and the Bible, but also the Gita and the Buddhist Sutras and the manifold issues of the hour. Secular, pluralistic civilization makes a fine setting for the spiritual search of serious-minded individuals in intellectual community.

At yet another formerly Protestant campus the recent appointment of a Dean of Chapel led one faculty member to write another:

> Today word was received that a Jewish president has replaced an Episcopalian priest with a Congregationalist minister, educated as a Nazarene, ordained in the United Church of Christ, married, this time, to a Unitarian-Universalist minister, and "persuaded that the ultimate

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religious vision must be characterized by universality," to preside over Presbyterian worship at *C*_____

On the main mall of a university that still claims ties to its founding church, at a spot within sight of the campus chapel and almost within the ambit of the founder's bronze statue, one may read on a handsome plaque the words that expressed the founder's vision and the university's mandate: "The aims of *D*_____ University are to assert a faith in the eternal union of knowledge and religion *set forth in the teachings and character of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*; to advance learning in all lines of truth; to defend scholarship against all false notions and ideals; to develop a Christian love of freedom and truth; to promote a sincere spirit of tolerance; to discourage all partisan and sectarian strife; and to render the largest permanent service to the individual, the state, and the nation, and the church. Unto these ends shall the affairs of this university always be administered." Perhaps not always. At the recent presidential inauguration, the chairman of the board of trustees read out this commitment. He omitted, however, the passage italicized above.

Evangelical Protestant institutions partook to a much lesser degree in either the academic enhancement or the secularization of their mainstream cousins during the period between the Civil War and World War I. Some of them today (and they are mostly colleges, not universities) have succeeded, though at a more deliberate pace, in their ambition to maintain a Christian character while upgrading their scholarly performance. Indeed, some of the most impressive small colleges in the nation are in this group. Yet some evangelical institutions are now growing wary of what they consider the aggressively anti-intellectual leadership of their denominations, and are moving to dissociate themselves from church-controlled governance.

On the campus of *E*_____ University where most trustees had always been selected collaboratively by the board and church representatives, the board withdrew itself from church involvement because it feared an imposition of fundamentalist tenets. The president explained that "We remain a Christian university with a *W*_____ relationship. We have just redefined that relationship in a mutually supportive way." Those with a sense of history might wonder, however, whether a "relationship" of this sort might labor under some of the same ambivalence as "relationships" between some of the campus freshmen.

A college founded by another church has in the latter years of its nearly 170-years existence redefined itself as "nondenominational." Chapel attendance has not been an integral part of campus life since the early 1960s, but apparently prayers have continued at certain campus ceremonies. Faculty resistance has lately broken out, since, as one professor put it, "prayer has become a symbol of division and exclusion for those who feel, some for secular and others for reasons of religious integrity, that prayer imposes a set of beliefs on them which they do not share and which are irrelevant to the academic mission of this college." The trustees responded by appointing a Committee on Religious Presence at *F*_____, but the tenor of campus comment suggests that the dissociation from the church signalled the end of religious presence anywhere but in the chapel.

Thus the initiative of Eliot, Kirkland, and the other Protestant educational reformers to free their institutions from church control continues to play itself out, and the alienation from particular churches seems to entail the delayed but inexorable estrangement from communal faith seeking understanding.

II

The process whereby the liberal Protestant colleges and universities were separated from their sponsoring churches in the period 1870-1910 may have been repeating itself during a comparable period, 1950-1990, among the very large cohort of universities and colleges that were founded as Catholic. This will require more by way of evidence than simply the high incidence of the familiar, irresolute "church-affiliated," "church-related," "tradition," "heritage," "background" nomenclature much in vogue in recent years. Yet we do not have available the abundance of historical literature on which the earlier part of this essay has been able to rely. The Catholic alienation, if it is underway, is too recent to allow more than an impressionistic estimate. On the other hand, if it is underway yet not complete, there is more at stake than in appraising a transformation that occurred generations ago.

Already in the 1950s a progressively emancipated atmosphere of public discourse allowed Catholic educators to raise critical doubts about the soundness of the enormous establishment of colleges and universities they had built and supported in this country. Best remembered, perhaps, is historian John Tracy Ellis' 1955 address in which he reproached his coreligionists for "the impoverishment of Catholic scholarship in this country, as well as the low state of Catholic leadership in most walks of national life." Ellis noted with regret "the absence of a love of scholarship for its own sake among American Catholics, and that even among too large a number of Catholics who are engaged in higher education. It might be described as the absence of a sense of dedication to an intellectual apostolate. This defect, in turn, tends to deprive many of those who spend their lives in the universities of the American Church of the admirable industry and unremitting labor in research and publication which characterize a far greater proportion of their colleagues on the faculties

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of the secular universities."

John Cavanaugh, Notre Dame's president emeritus, followed Ellis' reproach with an oracle against Catholics' "inferior position where culture and intellectual achievement are concerned." "Where," he asked, "are the Catholic Salks, Oppenheimers, Einsteins? . . . Perhaps it is true that we are not yet generally conscious of our mediocrity and not sufficiently impatient about it." Catholics who had in 1947 warmed to Boston Archbishop Richard Cushing's proud remark that there was not a single U.S. Catholic bishop born to a parent who held a college degree now took it as a reminder that in neither head nor members were they a body academic.

Catholics began to hear scholars like Richard Hofstadter deplore their record.

> One might have expected Catholicism to add a distinctive leaven to the intellectual dialogue in America, bringing as it did a different sense of the past and of the world, a different awareness of the human condition and of the imperatives of institutions. In fact, it has done nothing of the kind, for it has failed to develop an intellectual tradition in America or to produce its own class of intellectuals capable either of exercising authority among Catholics or of mediating between the Catholic mind and the secular or Protestant mind.

In response to this humiliating appraisal, presidents like Theodore M. Hesburgh of Notre Dame, Paul Reinert of St. Louis, Ann Ida Gannon of Mundelein, Jacqueline Grennan of Webster, and James Shannon of St. Thomas called their colleagues to a new level of academic excellence. Excellence also meant autonomy from control by church officials, and in 1967 a group of Catholic educators issued what became known as the Land O'Lakes statement, which echoed the declaration Charles Eliot had put to his religious establishment in the nineteenth century:

> The Catholic university today must be a university in the full modern sense of the word, with a strong commitment to and concern for academic excellence. To perform its teaching and research functions effectively, the Catholic university must have a true autonomy and academic freedom in the face of authority of every kind, lay or clerical, external to the academic community itself. To say this is simply to assert that institutional autonomy and academic freedom are essential conditions of life and growth and indeed of survival for Catholic universities as for all universities.

Shortly after the statement, Notre Dame and St. Louis set an example, which many Catholic institutions then followed, of removing the majorities of ecclesiastical persons—priests and members of religious orders—from their boards so as to leave the presidents effectively sovereign. This replicates the move led by Harvard, Yale, and Princeton to change over to lay boards of governance.

The president of one of these Catholic schools explains:

> At G_____, we identify ourselves as an independent institution with an X_____ [religious order] tradition; I mean X_____ as being Catholic as well. We're independent of ecclesiastical control; we're independent of any attempt to indoctrinate, of denominationalism. Has that Catholic and X_____ tradition disappeared completely? I would say no. The element of that tradition that I would hope would be subscribed to by people who are not coreligionists would be the idea that at this university, religious values, religious experience, are taken quite seriously, both as legitimate grounds for reflection, and also in terms of some kind of communal experience. In addition, while religious issues, religious experience, should be taken seriously, it's also true that they need not preclude a wholehearted humanism: an enthusiasm for the arts, a recognition of the ways of knowing, and all the rest.

While this statement might seem fuzzy, it is best appreciated by contrast with a statement published almost fifty years earlier by one of the author's predecessors in the presidency, who was explaining why there was no room for a graduate school, in the usual mode, on a Catholic campus. The immediate purpose of research, he suggested, is to increase the sum of human knowledge, to find things never known before. For Catholics, however, the most significant knowledge is already available, not through effort, but through revelation. There are—literally—no big surprises left:

> Here we have the radically peculiar cast of the Catholic approach to learning and the objective without which its thinking is unpalatable, to itself vain and pointless. It is the simple assumption that wisdom has been achieved by man, and that the humane use of the mind, the function proper to him as man, is contemplation and not research. I do not deny that in others the marks of this cast of mind may be found. But in its plenitude and perfection, it is peculiar to the Catholic mind alone.

It would seem reasonable to infer that some process of a fairly transformative dimension had been underway between the statement of the earlier president and that of his successor, and to conclude that if typical,

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it suggests an upheaval comparable to that wrought by the liberal Protestants in their educational establishment years ago.

The new ambitions of the Catholic educators carried heavy financial costs. The church had often been accused of providing little or no subsidy to its colleges and universities. This was not quite correct. Most Catholic colleges and universities were the foundations of religious orders who contributed their professional services for only token salaries. And the surge towards secularization arose only when the diminishing numbers of vowed religious was rendering that contribution less significant in the total budget. Funds in abundance would eventually begin to flow from alumni and donors, but the most immediate sources were the foundations and the government.

When government regulations appeared to require secularization as the condition of financial support, many Catholic institutions were prepared to conform. Shortly after the Land O'Lakes statement spoke defiance to outside authority, the State of New York, which had many of its citizens enrolled in independent colleges and universities that were almost all laboring under severe annual deficits, made institutional grants (known as "Bundy money") available to them. The Blaine Amendment in the state constitution forbade tax moneys to go to any sectarian entities, so 90 percent of the Catholic universities and colleges in the state abruptly declared themselves nonsectarian. What Protestant colleges had done with surprising alacrity to qualify for the first Carnegie grants, Catholic colleges were now doing to qualify for state grants. One university rewrote its brochures to delete references to it as a Catholic university, took down the crucifixes from the classroom walls, and removed its entry from the annual *Catholic Directory*. Some years later it allowed the entry to be restored, but insisted that the ordinary diocesan heading, "Colleges and Universities" be altered to "Universities and Colleges with religious in residence."

But even when outside financing comes unencumbered by the need to foreswear an institution's religious identity, its very availability has tended to loosen the institution's ties to the sponsoring but nonfunding church. Thus the G.I. Bill, the Public Facilities Act, the National Defense Education Act, and the various forms of student aid initiated in the 1960s—BEOGs, SEOGs, Work-Study, Pell grants, etc.—have subsidized the survival of many colleges and universities, but inexorably they have served as well to make the grantee institutions more anxious to observe the laws and regulations of the State than the strictures of the Church whose sponsorship is, by comparison, so intangible.

In the new atmosphere, questions inevitably arose about whether preferential admission or appointment of Catholics was compatible with a dedication to academic excellence. One Catholic university, which had for years professed that it "does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, handicap, color, (or) religion" and "welcomes applications without distinction on the basis of race or religious beliefs," discovered that Catholics had thereby declined from 70 percent to 59 percent of its student body in only ten years. A decision to raise this to 62 percent was met with sharp condemnation on campus. Said the president of the student senate: "Of course, there's a strong Catholic tradition here, but I don't think the way to uphold it is to discriminate essentially against non-Catholics who may be qualified." The president of the faculty senate said he would hate to see the university lose its Catholic identity. "At the same time, though, the university is striving for excellence and it is trying to recruit the best possible students. You have to balance those two things."

Catholics in this century have been as ready as Protestants in the last to embrace, without sense of contradiction, the belief that actions characteristic of faith could be guaranteed on their campuses without any unseemly insistence on guaranteeing that the personnel belong to their church. The founding president of one large Catholic University told his first board of trustees that

> *H*_____ is Catholic and "must ever remain Catholic" with regular instruction in Catholic doctrine being given to Catholic students. However, "true to the letter and spirit of the charter of the University, no religious test is applied to either students or teachers; no provision is made in the record forms for noting the religion of the students or professors."

A recent vice-president explained: "It didn't matter that a student was Catholic or not, any longer, it only mattered that people who were disadvantaged for one reason or another . . . had an opportunity." The second-ranking academic officer of the university states that "I think, by and large, this is not a Catholic institution. I think it is much more a *Y*_____ [religious order] institution, and more people identify with the *Y*_____ subset of Catholicism than with Catholicism per se." Yet there are presently only two members of the *Y*_____ order teaching at this large university, and both of them were appointed within the past three years.

When the Vatican prescribed in 1990 that Catholic universities must maintain a majority of Catholics among their faculty, a number of university presidents responded that this was a requirement that would have to be adjusted to American practices. Yet if recruitment is intentionally blind to religious commitment and its attendant convictions, new faculty naturally bridle at any residual expectation that they might or should identify with the institution's traditional identity. One social scientist recently replied

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to a flyer on behalf of a political action committee advocating ethically consistent life commitments in political life (embracing protection for the unborn, welfare reform, and nuclear disarmament):

> Let me make it abundantly clear to you that I am unequivocally prochoice on the issue of abortion and that I would hate another tree to be felled sending out mass mailings to unsympathetic persons like myself. I am certain that you purchased, or worse, were given a mailing list of staff from the University of *I*_____. I am angry that my employment there frequently results in false assumptions about my religious or political beliefs.

With the probable intent to avoid asserting any institutional beliefs that would offend a dissident individual, the chairman of the religion department offered the following grace at an annual faculty dinner in one Catholic university:

> We gather here this evening as a community of many faiths and of many traditions. We are Christian and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox, Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu, believer and nonbeliever alike.
>
> We gather to celebrate what we share in common: our humanity, our humane values, our commitment to this university and to its students, its faculty and its staff.
>
> We gather at the threshold of Christmas—a feast of peace and of good will to all—mindful of our call to be bearers and instruments of peace and good will, especially on behalf of those at the margins of society and those who suffer most keenly at this season of the year.
>
> We gather, finally, to eat—to sit at table one with another, and to partake of bread one with another, and to grow in solidarity one with another.
>
> May our loving Creator bless this food, bless those of us who partake of it, bless those who prepared it, and bless those who do not have what we have. Amen.

The prayer invites into itself not a congregation of faith but an aggregation of individuals, and the invitation is for them to pray simultaneously but not communally. No one can be offended because there is nothing to disavow.

The liberal Protestants had attempted being corporately Christian without any corporate link to a church. The Catholics have been drawn to a yet more difficult venture: remaining corporately Catholic without any public commitment to the church.

For Catholics during this period, the church had seemed a more formidable adversary to intellectual prowess than local clergy of the Protestant churches—congregational, presbyterial, or episcopal—had seemed to their coreligionists a century earlier. The bishop of Rome, claiming immediate jurisdiction over every local congregation and individual, was served by administrative personnel whose readiness to require intellectual obedience was unsustained by relevant theological or historical scholarship, or by a habit of explaining their disciplinary actions. Thus Catholic educators faced threats of intervention by Rome which, while rare, were potentially quite devastating. Rome's remembered obscurantism on such matters as biblical studies, natural science, and historical development made even potential threats seem intolerable to many educators of loyal but scholarly faith.

To achieve autonomy without appearing to violate continuity the institutions have done what their pioneering precursors had done earlier: adopt ambiguous language that has quickly manifested a tendency to devolve. There is frequent talk of humanizing, and of "values." For instance, one public relations brochure addresses the question: "What does it mean when you say you are a Catholic university?" It begins by mentioning that the institution was founded long ago by an order of priests, but then the language shifts to "heritage," which is identified with "the Judeo-Christian tradition," which is about forming "lasting personal values." The remainder of the statement assures incoming students that the half of the student body who are Catholic will openly discuss religion with them but "without pressure to conform to a particular religion." "Ours," it affirms, "is a community proud of its Christian heritage." Twenty years earlier, the same university's brochure had spoken of Catholicism, of Pius XI's depiction of the Christian-Catholic character, and of endowment "with the redemptive merits of Christ which we call grace or supernatural life." It seems rather a long road from there to "lasting personal values."

The Catholic colleges, in a liberating ecumenical age, have begun, one century after the Protestants did the same, to welcome an increasingly diversified faculty in which the communicants of the sponsoring church are fewer, and often a minority. But statistics tell only part of the story. The opening to noncommunicants appears to reflect a spirit not so much ecumenical as indifferent. Non-Catholics are welcomed not as allies in a religious undertaking; instead, they are recruited, evaluated, appointed, and welcomed without *any* frank word about religious commitment, the college's or their own, unless by way of apology. While the remaining believers of the sponsoring church may imagine that the newcomers are being incorporated into the traditional undertaking of the college, in fact the opposite seems to be happening. Instead of their even being asked to defer to the college's religious commitment, the college stands ready to defer to their many individual commitments or anti-commitments, out of what it calls hospitality but what

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may more frankly be called a failure of nerve. The ancient tokens of hallmark faith are withdrawn, evacuated, or desecrated so as not to make anyone feel estranged.

One college explained to its public:

> The first additions to the Z_____ [religious order] faculty and staff were committed Catholic men and women. But it was apparent as the college grew to true university status that a pluralist society requires institutions which are effectively pluralist in outlook, and that education for life in this society has to be conceived as broadly as the full range of responsible opinion in the society is broad. A diversity of viewpoints contributes to the intellectual and spiritual health of the university, and it is inconceivable now that it be entirely or even mainly staffed by men who are members of one religious order or even by Catholics alone.

The brochure is headed by an epigram from Kierkegaard: "It is not worthwhile remembering that past which cannot become present."

In one Catholic college a student interviewed twenty-two members of the Department of Theology; fifteen were Catholics (five of them priests). He posed three questions. First: "Should J_____, a Catholic institution, try to cultivate an appreciation of prayer in its students?" The virtually unanimous answer was Yes. Second: "What role, if any, do the theology faculty have in cultivating this appreciation?" To this faculty suggested personal example, participation in retreats, or collaboration with campus ministry. Third: "Do you ever begin your classes with a prayer?" To this eighteen answered No. (Throughout its history, until the last twenty years, all classes at this university had begun with a prayer led by the instructor.) The interviewer pressed for reasons, and they were forthcoming:

> In the classroom, prayer must be looked at academically. It can be studied, but should not be practiced, at least not in any formal manner. Theology is an intellectual and academic discipline; "it is not religious education or catechism." Without the separation, the theological inquiry would be less rigorous. Beginning required classes with a prayer might confuse students and reinforce their previous simplistic ideas. Regular prayer in class might "shut the door to authentic prayer by identifying it with formality."
>
> Another reason for not praying in class stems from a concern for the rights of the individual. Some might not be ready to pray; some may resent being subject to prayer. This reasoning sees prayer in class to be presumptuous, an imposition on individual freedom, and a practice that takes advantage of the students' required presence.
>
> What of students in ministry courses? Here too there was reluctance. The class is not a faith community with a shared experience that would lead to prayer. Some said they would feel presumptuous to ask the class to pray because that simply is not their role. Their purpose is to teach, not to lead prayer.

The few faculty who did begin classes with prayer said they found the students uniformly sincere, even devout, and happy to join. And they found no problem with prayer in any class at a Catholic university.

One president emeritus of a Catholic university wrote recently:

> A peculiarity of the modern Catholic university is that it has taken to itself large numbers of faculty members who are neither Catholic nor, in many cases, Christian. On the other hand, all of them are fully aware of the kind of institution to which they have committed their lives and work, and in most instances they endorse both the university's preoccupations and the presence of the church within it.

Apart from its implausible claim that the university's Catholic character was a matter of explicit reflection and endorsement by the noncommunicants who had come to join it without ever being asked for their undertakings towards what it calls, not the university's "commitment," but its "preoccupations," the statement seems to imply that there is some other effective way for a university to be Catholic if the faculty are not. What was first intended unreflectively as an act of denominational ecumenism devolves into interdenominational vagueness and then into nondenominational secularism. And it is, as it had been a hundred years earlier, largely the work of clergy and religiously active lay educators, who find themselves opposed by church officials and some tendentious colleagues who give every sign of being intellectually cramped and authoritarian.

Religious faith comes forward nowadays in softer garments. Justice and peace, social service, awareness of and care for the environment, volunteer work; or liberal arts, discriminating inquiry, courses in professional ethics, gender studies: these are presented as the contemporary surrogates for faith.

One study of Catholic values on Catholic campuses disclosed that when administrators, faculty, students, and alumni were asked to identify core Catholic values in the culture of their institutions, "high academic standards," "academic freedom," and "respect for the individual" regularly ranked at or near the top, while "community of faith" trailed far behind.

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The transformation of Vanderbilt's Bible Department into a School of Religion and then into a nondenominational divinity school had been a first phase in the typical marginalizing of theology at the university. The second phase saw theology departments transformed into religious studies departments. Is this same secularization of faith-related scholarship occurring in Catholic universities and colleges? One recent study by sociologist Frank Schubert traced a shift in theological teaching at several Catholic universities. Course descriptions such as these had been typical of the decade 1955-65:

> **Learning Christ.** Palestinian Judaism at the time of Christ. Old Testament backgrounds. Apologetic questions connected with the written Gospel. Biblical inspiration, norms for fruitful reading of Scripture. A life of Christ in the gospels and Pauline letters. His teaching, testimony, redemptive Death and Resurrection.
>
> **Faith, Hope, Charity, and Grace.** The nature, divisions, qualities, and necessity of the theological virtues, the eschatological doctrines of the Church, and the supernatural life and activity of elevated human nature.
>
> **The Sacramental Liturgy of the Church.** The priestly quality of God's people; liturgy as communal, hierarchical, sacrificial, sacramental. History of eucharistic and other sacramental rites. The celebration of the Mystery of Christ.

Two decades later the institutional catalogues were offering such courses as these:

> **Global Ethics.** Fifteen participation-learning sessions aimed at sensitizing oneself to the global situation of political, social, and economic imbalance—particularly in developing countries of the Third World. Emphasis is on both information and the clarification of attitudes and values. Some of the areas to be covered will include economic realities in the global village, capitalism and the distribution of wealth, an examination of the multinational corporation, a case study of neocolonialism, power realities with a developing country, educational realities in the third world, a comparison of values—particularly East Africa and North America.
>
> **The Books of the Bible I-II.** The Bible is, without rival, the most influential collection of writings in the history of western civilization. The ideas contained in this anthology, its languages, literary styles, and lexicon are present in all the languages of the western world. One cannot assume to be educated without a knowledge of the Bible, its history and its concepts. This course will serve as an introduction to each of the books of the Bible, analyzing each in turn, studying its historical setting and comparing extra-biblical sources with the biblical text.
>
> **The Ritual Process.** This course will be a laboratory workshop experience of the elements which constitute ritual expression, both as a historical and current phenomenon. Students will be expected to critique and, in some instances, perform established rituals. They will also be expected to adapt or create new forms of ritualized expression from existing or emerging patterns—e.g., ancient rites of initiation, the current rites of Baptism, Bar Mitzvah—a new or adapted rite based on these models.

The trend shown is an unresolved one. Catholic departments are tending more and more to redesignate themselves by the intentionally neutral title: Religious Studies. There is a strenuous determination to be acknowledged as Catholic while disclaiming accountability to church superintendency. And the secularized graduate programs that train new faculty have increasingly influenced Catholics to consider faith as a matter of private (and possibly emotional) preference inappropriate to academic interchange. So it may be that theological scholarship is on its way to the margin, if it is not there already.

This pastiche of contemporary anecdotes can be no more than suggestive. But the suggestion is this: that secularization is rapidly bleaching the Catholic character out of that church's universities and colleges, with all the elements we saw typified in the Vanderbilt story.

As with the Protestant alienation a century earlier, the severance of formal ties has been the achievement of enlightened and observant clergy, or members of religious orders, acting in order to shelter their upgrading institutions from church authorities who were seen as anti-intellectual, intrusively authoritarian, and unable to offer any resources but their own unimpressive governance. And, as a century earlier, the Catholic institutions enjoyed an immediate honeymoon period wherein autonomy actually enhanced the institution as both a faith community and a house of liberal learning. But then the slow and inexorable gravity pull of the secularism dominant in the force-field of the academy begins to retard and then counteract the inertial momentum that has hitherto set the course of the Catholic college or university, until, after a period when the forms and symbols of Christian identity are gradually evacuated of their conviction, the institution finally emerges as a wraith of the Christian community it once was.

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III

Herewith some apparent morals to the story.

1. *The only plausible way for a college or university to be significantly Christian is for it to function as a congregation in active communion within a church.* If it is not a community that can worship together, on some church's terms, then it is or will inexorably become secular. In Christianity, communities that float free are not viable. There is neither faith nor ecumenism ungrounded on church.

2. *In every one of its component elements—governors, administrators, faculty, and students—the academy must have a predominance of committed and articulate communicants of its mother church.* This must be regarded, not as an alien consideration, but as a professional qualification. This means that every adjective whereby an institution wishes to qualify itself (including its Christian allegiance) must represent a quality that is openly and unapologetically appraised and solicited in every recruitment process. Various academic qualifications can be and are traded off against one another, but when any one of them is systematically subordinated to the others, it will shortly disappear from the institution. Communal faith is in one sense, however, unique among professional credentials: apparently the only qualification which, if lost, is institutionally unrecoverable, is commitment in a church to Christ.

3. *A Christian college or university must advise noncommunicant members openly and explicitly when welcoming them that the institution is constitutionally committed to its church in a way that must transcend and transfigure the commitments of individual members.* Similarly, any institution will decline to let its foundational norms of scholarship yield to the private and personal standards of each individual scholar. Though the appropriate freedom of inquiry and advocacy will be protected procedurally for all, it cannot be done with prejudice to the school's filial bond to the church.

4. *Granted the inveterate intellectual mediocrity within the churches and their officers, and the inveterate contempt for faith among intellectual elites, the Christian college or university must expect continual low-intensity distrust from either direction. It will have to be an active force in its church to assure that learning and scholarship are honored as professional qualifications for church office. And it will have to be an active force in the academic world to assure that Christian faith and commitment can introduce the mind to its most far-reaching insights and judgments.* The polarization process typified at Vanderbilt, and associated with secularization generally, has considered veto power by church officers as the essential and unacceptable feature of affiliation. In an atmosphere of communal trust, it is still unclear whether there might be other arrangements, untried thus far, that could service the affiliation.

5. *Lastly, whatever a university or college is committed to must be able to be professed out loud, and honestly.* When church-related colleges in America were in tranquil but lackadaisical union with their churches, little was said about their relationship because it was unreflective. It was only when a mutual antipathy began to pull the colleges and universities and the churches away from one another that the new religious rhetoric arose, largely in denial of what was happening. In retrospect it seems that most of the assurances and mission statements and vision statements were obituaries. That is because they were wistful or dishonest attempts to supply by talk what no longer existed in fact. The vacant talk came in as a counterfeit for the frank talk that was needed all along.

If our account of alienation as a repeating process is reliable, then the American Catholic institutions of higher education are nearing the end of a process of formal detachment from accountability to their church, and instead of exerting themselves to oblige that church to be a more credible patron of higher learning, they are qualifying for acceptance by and on the terms of the secular academic culture, and are likely soon to hand over their institutions unencumbered by any compromising accountability to the church. FT

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Pacifism, Just War & the Gulf

Stanley Hauerwas and Richard John Neuhaus

I

January 30, 1991

Dear Richard,

Your column in the *Wall Street Journal* (January 23, 1991), "Just War and This War," came just in time for me. I have been thinking hard, as you can imagine, about what a pacifist does in war. The article—well done as usual—has provoked me to put my reflections on paper.

In particular I want to respond to your suggestion that pacifists cannot speak against a particular war in a discriminating way. I take it the argument is that since pacifists believe all wars are wrong, they cannot say anything in particular about specific wars. So when the Catholic pacifist bishops condemn this war they in fact are not playing by the rules.

That set of assumptions must be strongly challenged, for such assumptions presume a continuing Niebuhrian characterization of pacifism. Reinhold Niebuhr wanted his pacifists to be vocational pacifists who believed that war was some kind of terrible mistake. As you know, I certainly do not represent that kind of pacifism. My pacifism, which is based upon christological presuppositions, does not look on our disavowal of war as a strategy to make the world less violent. Indeed, my own view is that Christians are called to nonviolence not because our nonviolence promises to make the world free of war, but because in a world of war we, as faithful followers of Jesus, cannot imagine being other than nonviolent.

I think that it would not be useful in this context to get into a debate about pacifism versus just war theory in terms of faithfulness to the gospel. However, I do think that there is a fundamental issue that needs to be made explicit if we are to conduct an honest debate. The question is what produces just war categories in the first place. From one perspective just war theory can be seen as an attempt by Christians to develop carefully controlled exceptions to the church's general pacifist position. In that respect just war is dependent upon the practice of the Christian community being fundamentally nonviolent. In other words, just war presupposes that those who would use violence bear the burden of proof. The just war criteria are a series of checks to help keep Christians honest in their thinking about the possible legitimate use of violence. In that case, I see no reason why pacifists cannot as easily as just war advocates enter into the kind of concrete judgments that might inform Christian conscience about this or that particular war.

Another account of just war theory, however, presupposes that just war is not a theory of exceptions but rather an attempt to control the logic of war given the assumption that Christians are always going to need to use violence. That is the reason that Paul Ramsey, of blessed memory, always argued that just wars should never be fought for peace. Rather, just wars are fought for limited political objectives that attempt only to secure just order in an essentially disordered world. Hence, this latter view of just war theory presumes that the first Christian stance is not nonviolence, but rather the ordered use of violence.

If this latter position is taken, the problem becomes how you generate just war criteria in the first place. If you accept, as Ramsey did, a basically "realist" account of international relations, then it is not clear that you can sustain the just war presumption that you would rather lose the war than have to resort, for example, to direct attacks upon noncombatants.

I do not raise this issue to try to defeat the just war position in principle. Rather, I raise it to indicate that the kind of justifications you give for just war theory make a difference for how you understand the

STANLEY HAUERWAS, *a member of the Editorial Board of* FIRST THINGS, *is Professor of Theological Ethics at the Divinity School, Duke University.* RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS *is Editor-in-Chief of* FIRST THINGS.

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relationship between the pacifist and just war judgments about particular wars. Being a Christian pacifist does not in principle prohibit me from trying to be a good citizen. Such citizenship demands, however, that I require whoever is running the state to determine policy on just war grounds. Accordingly, I do not see why in principle I am prohibited from making the kinds of judgments that might contribute to my fellow just war citizens' perception of whether or not a particular war might be averted.

Crucial to this set of issues is the question of who is doing the judging about justifiable war. Here I am afraid we have a deep difference. You continue to presume that Christian ethics is to be written in a manner that makes it accessible to those in power, or at least to the readers of the *Wall Street Journal.* (In that context I think your attack on Christian criticism of the war cannot help but reinforce, in spite of your own attempt to support just war categories, the secular view that religious leaders are hopelessly idealist since they fail to see that war is finally not open to moral control.) In contrast, I assume that Christian ethics is to be written first and foremost for Christians in the church, some of whom may find themselves in political office.

You assume that just war theory is a general ethic that should and can be used by anyone—in particular, leaders of states. Such an assumption accepts the transformation by Grotius and others of just war theory into an aspect of international law applicable to the emerging nation-state system. In other words, your account of just war is ahistorical, since you want just war to appear as an abstract and universal set of criteria that seems to come from nowhere. Missing is any account of the difference it makes who is using the criteria, from what position, and for what purpose. Consider, for example, the difference between your application of the theory and its use to inform penitential practice by Christians for the examination of conscience. The latter use requires the presumption that when Christians kill their souls are in jeopardy. In contrast, your use of the theory does not presume that salvation is at stake or that the church exists as part of that salvation. All you assume is the nation-state in a system of nation-states.

In your article you rightly stress that there is no way to avoid prudential judgments about these matters. I think that you are also correct that at least at a very general level the Iraqi war is arguably within just war constraints. But what your argument lacks is any account of how Christian convictions might inform the kind of prudential judgment you rightly indicate must be made. Here again the crucial issue is who is doing the judgment and for what end. I must admit I find your willingness to defer to "expertise in the fields" unusual in one who in good Niebuhrian fashion usually challenges those who would mask self-interest in the language of objectivity. Surely you do not think international relations a "science." Moreover, to defer to "expertise" would seem to evacuate just war of the kind of prudence it is meant to form—that is, wise judgments about contingent matters in which "facts" and "values" cannot be separated. Those are precisely the kinds of judgments most "experts" in international relations dismiss in the name of "realism."

On specific just war grounds, for example, it is not at all clear to me that this war has met the criteria of last resort. You can praise George Bush all you want for the five months that he gave Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait, but I think that is to take a very narrow reading of what has been going on. Do not we as Christians need to ask why George Bush decided in the beginning to make this an issue of international politics? Why could the invasion of Kuwait not be seen as an inter-Arab problem that the Arabs would need to resolve among themselves?

The answer given is that we must respond to naked aggression. But again the issue here is who is the "we"? Even if we assume the "we" is something called the United States of America, it can certainly be questioned whether the "respond to aggression" argument is persuasive. We did not respond to Saddam Hussein's aggression against Iran. We did not respond when Saddam Hussein gassed the Kurds. We have not responded to aggressions in Chad and Timor. We did not respond to China's invasion of Tibet, nor did we try to stop China from brutalizing its own people. Why now this aggression?

This is not to argue that the "respond to aggression" argument has no power, but rather to point out that it is inadequate. Surely the situation involves further considerations—such as our need for oil. Now I would not want to deny that an appropriate reason for war on just war grounds is a nation's economic survival. It might even be the case that it is not our oil that we are most worried about, but oil for the Third World. If this were the case, the war could be seen as an extraordinarily charitable act on our part to ensure that developing nations continue to have the resources necessary for their development. One might develop some cynicism about that view of things given Japan's economic strengths, but I am willing to overlook that at this point.

But once such considerations are introduced, surely Christian conviction must begin to make a difference. Would it not have been appropriate for George Bush to have addressed the American people, many of whom are Christian, and to have said, "In order to avoid a war in the Persian Gulf we are going to have to change our consumption habits concerning oil. Indeed, for weaker nations to be able to have the resources they need, we may be required to devote billions of dollars in aid to sustain them." If this war is going to cost $80 billion, why could we not have invested that in sustaining the kind of economic development the threat to which made this war seem

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so compelling?

What I have in mind here are those wonderful examples Paul Ramsey gives in *Who Speaks for the Church?* concerning how we, as Christians, might be the kind of people who could make the necessities of policy less matters of necessity. In other words, if as Christians we were more determined in our habits of nonviolence, would it not encourage George Bush to address us in this way: "Part of my problem is that I am a leader of an extraordinarily rich nation with rich Christians. You have gotten used to being rich and you do not want to lose your wealth. However, I cannot see how we can pursue a just foreign policy that avoids war unless we examine our own habits as a people. That is what I must call upon us to do if we are to be a nation capable of fighting more nearly justifiable wars."

I am aware that the response to such a proposal is that it is politically unrealistic. George Bush could not be elected President if he said that. But in that case I must ask how Christians are to view the claim that this is a justifiable war in that it is absolutely a last resort.

For those who think the argument too theoretical, let me make it more concrete. Assume first of all that we were engaged in the blockade in a manner that was not an attack on a noncombatant. After five months of waiting in the Saudi desert, President Bush might find it necessary to address the American people thus: "We haven't gotten the kind of response we want. But we do not want to go to war unless it is absolutely the last resort. Delaying longer may mean that if we go to war we will lose more troops than we would if we went to war now. However, I know that you are a peaceable people and would do anything to avoid unnecessary death, either of Iraqis or our own soldiers. So I am going to ask you to be patient and wait longer so that we might use every means at our disposal to avoid the necessity of war."

I take it that the analogy would not be unlike what would have been necessary to justify the invasion of Japan rather than the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I am sure you would agree with me that those bombings, as well as the earlier bombings of Tokyo, were clearly immoral. (Though George Will in a recent column declared the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki "morally correct" since it saved "more than a million lives.") What was morally necessary was for the American people to face more deaths by both Japanese and American soldiers on the beaches of Japan rather than countenance those terrible immoral actions. The natural response, of course, is that the American people would not have stood for that.

But then I must ask: do we have a population trained well enough in the habits of sacrifice to make just war possible? Pacifists are often condemned for being utopian and idealist. But I take it that the habits of the population necessary to conduct justifiable war require great drafts of courage and sacrifice not unlike that of nonviolence. Where do we see that in the current situation? Is one any less an idealist for believing that such habits are necessary?

I am aware, of course, that there are further aspects of the situation that need to be discussed, such as the place of Israel. Indeed, I suspect the war is not merely about aggression and/or oil, but is also very much about Israel. God knows, given the Christian persecution of the Jews through the centuries, it is not easy for Christians to ask Jews to take more risks. But surely the long-term safety of Israel is as much threatened by creating even more Arab hatred toward Israel. Indeed, on geopolitical grounds it seems to me that this war is a mammoth distraction from other critical issues of international relations. As Zbigniew Brzezinski and others have pointed out, the greater danger to world peace currently is the turmoil in the Soviet Union. The situation there may be extremely critical in terms of long-term geopolitical considerations of how we ensure a world order less likely to be engaged in war.

I think that way of approaching the matter of a new world order is extremely important. I certainly hope that you shudder with me at the way George Bush talks of a new world order. I must admit that all I could think of as he spoke of it was Augustine's City of God. Surely the order Bush was talking about was the order that is based upon war and violence. That is not the city of our God, nor is it the kind of peace we have been offered as Christians. I am well aware that Augustine's two cities have been used to underwrite realist accounts of the world that justify our engagement in violence à la Reinhold Niebuhr. However, I am quite sure that this is a strong misreading of Augustine that does not take account of Augustine's never-failing sense that the church must always stand independent and peaceful against the world. I do not see how the narrative you imbedded in your article helps us to do that. But again the crucial question is: who is the "us"? Your rhetoric mixes "we Christians" with "we Americans" in a way that I think compromises our ability as Christians to be a people with habits necessary to help our non-Christian fellow citizens realize that the story of righteousness they associate with being American is deeply problematic.

I think that you are right that some of the anti-war response by the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches is simply endemic anti-Americanism. I certainly would not want to identify with that attitude. But while I do not think that America is the source of all the evil in the world, neither do I think it is the source of all good or the beacon of hope for all nations in the world.

In that respect, Richard, I must say I think you dismiss the National Council of Churches' criticism of Columbus Day far too easily. Surely Columbus Day

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is deeply problematic for Christians, as Columbus represents the fusing of economic and military power with the witness to the gospel. That Columbus is part of our story as Christians cannot be denied, but that story surely must be told in a way far different from the way it is celebrated by the United States of America. All history is a history of injustice as our civilizations are built on innocent blood, but as Christians we must resist turning those narratives into histories of righteousness.

Surely sin has something to do with all this, and I must admit I miss it in your account of just war. For example, even on Niebuhrian grounds, might you not counsel George Bush to look twice at his assumed justification for this war? Surely Niebuhr would have said that such justifications reek of sin, which consideration should make us pause before we engage in armed hostilities. Again the issue is: how do your Christian convictions really enter into the kind of prudential judgments you say must be made? Who are you allowing to write the narrative that justifies this war? As your pacifist brother, I simply will not allow myself to be shunted, in Niebuhrian fashion, into "a necessary reminder" for those who must engage in a politically responsible way given the realities of the world. I have a responsibility as a Christian to challenge those narratives that have so tragically captured our imagination that they seem to make war inevitable.

As your Methodist brother in Christ, I ask you to take your Catholic brothers and sisters more seriously. John Paul II is not just the leader of Catholics in America, he is the spiritual guide for Catholics in Egypt, Iran, and Iraq. How can the world know that the peace made ours in Christ is true if Christians kill Christians in the name of national boundaries? I am well aware of the quote from Pius XII that other nations have an obligation "not to abandon a nation that is attacked," but I would challenge the assumption that the only alternative to abandonment is war.

I know that the deepest agony about this war has little to do with arguments about the viability of just war and/or pacifism. All that I have said cannot help but appear as Monday-morning quarterbacking. It is just too late. If that is true, however, it is also too late for just war justifications that too often seem to make what "our" nation does a moral necessity: a nice reversal of the Kantian claim that "ought" requires a "can." We simply seem caught in a "lesser of two evils" choice—a situation that it is precisely the intent of just war theory to avoid. The import of my remarks is that as Christians we must find a way to resist such necessity by forcing our imagination to envision alternatives not possible for those whose narratives are not formed by the cross of Jesus.

Of course there remains the terrible problem of how to stand for peace while "our" men and women are risking everything in battle. There is a horrible logic that compels us to attribute righteousness to war exactly because of the sacrifice made by those who prosecute war. War becomes its own justification simply because it is so terrible. As a pacifist, I pass no judgment against those who will do the actual killing and dying in this war. (I do not think most are there "voluntarily"—though I think that finding themselves there they will want to think they are doing their duty.) Rather I am overcome with regret that I have done so little to help make clear that there is an alternative to war. I pray most of all that as the soldiers kill they will do so sorrowfully, recognizing that this cannot be what God has called us to be. I know as an advocate of just war you will join me in that prayer as we must now prepare to oppose all celebration of "victory."

Peace,
Stanley

II

February 7, 1991

Dear Stan,

My essay in the *Wall Street Journal* was written during the first week of the allied military response to Saddam Hussein's aggression of August 2, 1990, and your letter to me shortly thereafter. By the time this appears in print, the war will in all probability be over. As you know, I am not sure about the wisdom of a public exchange, but perhaps you are right. Certainly you do raise some questions of perennial importance, and there may well be interest in how two Christians attempted to engage one another during a time of war.

As to whether pacifists can address the justice of particular wars, I wrote: "An oddity in the Catholic situation is that bishops who insist that *all* military action is morally impermissible in principle are influentially involved in deliberations about whether a specific military action is morally permissible." I admit that it is possible, at least in theory, that a pacifist could, by a remarkable act of self-denying discipline, abstract himself from his convictions. As a "rational and disinterested observer," he could then contribute to deliberating whether a specific war is morally right, even though he knows that this war, like all wars, is morally wrong.

I note, however, that the bishops who are declared pacifists do not exhibit such discipline in their arguments and agitations, and it is therefore indeed an "oddity" that, on questions of war and peace, they are so influential in the bishops conference. Second, it seems odd that I should be reminding you that your entire project as a Christian ethicist has been directed against the idea that moral deliberation can or should be done by what you insist is the myth of the rational and disinterested observer. (A point on which we are,

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for the most part, in agreement.) Third, you are fond of quoting John Howard Yoder's maxim that Christians have no business doing ethics for Caesar. It is odd in the extreme, but I wonder if that is not exactly what you are doing in your letter, even to the point of writing speeches for Caesar.

You touch on so many matters, Stan, that I am forced to be rather eclectic in my response. You say, "Christians are called to nonviolence . . . because in a world of war we, as faithful followers of Jesus, cannot imagine being other than nonviolent." I do not understand why God's call should be limited by our imagination. More to the immediate point, from at least the second century, millions upon millions of Christians have thought (imagined?) it to be their moral duty to engage in warfare. Many of them have been esteemed by the church as exemplars of Christian virtue, and some have been canonized as saints.

If you cannot "imagine" this to be the case, is it possible that the problem is with your imagination? Or maybe you are saying that they and those who approve of them are not "faithful followers of Jesus." Or perhaps you are really saying that they are not Christians, in which case you would seem to be excommunicating the overwhelming majority of those who, past and present, thought themselves to be Christians. I know that you now disown the title "sectarian," but it does seem that sectarian is the right word for those who affirm a church that has slight relationship to the empirical reality that is the church through time.

I wrote: "The presumption of just war theory is against the use of military force. The theory erects an obstacle course of moral testings aimed at preventing the unjust resort to war." And yes, I agree with Paul Ramsey that the goal is "to secure just order in an essentially disordered world." The question is not violence vs. nonviolence but legitimate vs. illegitimate uses of force. Violence is better understood as the illegitimate use of force, and just war theory is designed to restrain that as much as possible in a history that will always be marked by violence short of the End Time. As we have discussed at length over the years, especially in connection with your *The Peaceable Kingdom*, I believe your prohibition of "violence" leaves no room for the legitimate uses of force or coercion, even with respect to domestic policing functions. It is not helpful for you to say that we should not "get into a debate about pacifism versus just war theory in terms of faithfulness to the gospel." That, it seems to me, is precisely what your letter is into, except when it is doing ethics for Caesar.

You write that it is a just war presumption "that you would rather lose the war than have to resort, for example, to direct attacks upon noncombatants." This war has been notable, to date, for the relatively few civilian casualties, and no attacks (by the allies) have been *directed* against noncombatants. As to Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Dresden, one might agree that those bombings were immoral, while going on to argue that the allies did not "have to" do what they did. The alternative was not preferring to lose the war. It seems to me that you are confounding the distinction between the justice of the cause and the justice of the means employed (*jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*). Many immoral things are done—although not of necessity—in the prosecution even of a just war. They can (and must) be condemned as immoral without negating the justice of the war. In any event, I do not understand why you think Hiroshima is in any sense an "analogy" with the war in the Gulf. My essay, after all, was titled "Just War and *This* War" (emphasis added).

You wonder who I mean when I say "we." In that essay, I meant "we Americans," very much including we Americans who are Christians. I am, by the grace of God, a member of the City of God with responsibilities for the City of Man. (The discussion of our different readings of Augustine's great text is for another time.) We Christians are, in the words of the second-century *Letter to Diognetus*, "alien citizens"—people for whom "any foreign country is a homeland, and any homeland a foreign country." I do not know that there is a difference between us on this, although I am puzzled by some of your formulations. You say you want to be "a good citizen," but, when you speak of our nation, you put "our" in quotes. Why is that? Are you suggesting that one can be a citizen without a nation, as you sometimes seem to suggest that one can be a Christian without a church? (I appreciate that most of the time you insist that Christian existence apart from the church is an illusion.)

You say there is a "deep difference" between us because I "presume that Christian ethics is to be written in a manner that makes it accessible to those in power." And that comes immediately after you have declared it to be your duty to give ethical counsel to "whoever is running the state." I don't get it, Stan. Is the ethics in which you would instruct George Bush not "Christian ethics"? If not, what kind of ethics is it? If it is Christian ethics but it is not accessible to George Bush, isn't it quite futile for you to attempt to be "a good citizen" who would counsel "whoever is running the state"?

There is no doubt a difference between us, but I think it is not the difference you suggest. We both want our nation not to engage in unjust wars. You, as a pacifist, want it to engage in no wars at all. We both believe that the church *qua* church cannot be a belligerent in temporal conflicts, for it is the prolepsis of the peaceable kingdom of eschatological promise. I believe that Christians are alien citizens whose primary loyalty is to the heavenly *polis* and whose obedience to Christ the King entails responsibility for the earthly *polis*. That responsibility may include

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engaging in war, in narrowly prescribed circumstances which it is the purpose of just war theory to define. Being an alien citizen is a very unsatisfactory thing, fraught with moral ambiguities and the need for conscientious discernment. It is not of our choosing, however, that we live "between the times" of resurrection promise and historical consummation.

Further, I believe—and here, too, I expect there is a difference between us—that the God in whom we trust for the fulfillment of the promise is also the Creator of the universe and Lord of history in a manner that assures a certain correspondence, albeit disordered by sin, between His will and human reason and the laws of nature. As a result, ethics grounded in and thoroughly compatible with Christian faith is "accessible" also to non-Christians. It is, in other words, a public ethic. The Christian tradition provides various ways of describing such an ethic—e.g., natural law, common grace, orders of preservation, the twofold kingdom. This is the ethic that is pertinent to the right ordering of the earthly *polis*, and Christians are not "compromised" when they employ it. Indeed they have a Christian duty to do so. Why there should be such a public ethic is itself part of the Christian story about the nature of God's world.

According to that story, Christian existence is inescapably dualistic. Short of the End Time, we are surrounded by monistic temptations. There is the monism that separates Christian discipleship from our membership in the earthly *polis* (sectarianism). There is the monism that would subsume the earthly *polis* in the rule of the regenerate (theocracy), and the monism that would do the reverse (Erastianism). All are temptations to be resisted. The necessary tension of Christian existence must not be relaxed until it is relieved upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet when "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." (Revelation 11:15)

It is of more than incidental importance that George Bush is not just "whoever is running the state." He participates in the same tension in which we find ourselves. You are not doing ethics for a Caesar who is indifferent or hostile to Christian discipleship. George Bush is, unless you know something that I don't know, our brother in Christ. Had I his ear, I would surely "counsel [him] to look twice at his assumed justification for this war." But it would be presumptuous for me to do so as though he had not already considered the matter many times more than twice. He sought moral and spiritual counsel from Christian leaders. I have reason to believe that he prayed earnestly over his decision. He explained his decision to the nation with explicit reference to just war criteria. Of course that does not mean that he made the right decision.

In the article to which you take such exception, I framed my conclusion this way: "The military response may yet turn out to be a tragic mistake. God only knows. Certainly mistakes will be made. But, on the basis of just war principles and with reasonable trust in the prudential judgment of our leaders, we may confidently proceed in the belief that our course is just." Confidence is not absolute certainty. We walk by faith and not by sight, leaving final judgments to God.

There are yet other differences raised by your letter. You suggest, for instance, that the resort to force did not meet the criterion of "last resort." Of course it is always possible to call another conference or set another deadline. But prudential judgment is about *reasonable* measures, and I believe the case can be made that every reasonable measure had been exhausted, and that further delay would have compounded the wrong that had to be remedied.

You say, for instance, that there are other aggressions to which we did not respond with military force. Of course. I don't know why you think that is a pertinent argument, however. Are you suggesting, for instance, that we should intervene militarily to drive China from Tibet, and could do so within the limits of just war criteria? Or are you suggesting that, if we cannot remedy every wrong by the use of force, we should remedy no wrong by the use of force? If that is the point, it would seem to be but another, and quite unconvincing, way of arriving at a pacifist policy, which, I would urge, is no policy at all.

Much of your letter is premised upon your reading of geopolitical, military, and economic matters. It is not the case that I criticized religious leaders who condemned the war for being too "idealistic." I do criticize them for presenting their prudential judgments as moral arguments, presumably because they are the judgments of citizens who happen to be religious leaders. You know perfectly well that I do not think politics is a "science" best left to the "experts." But when considering, for instance, the "proportionality" criterion of just war, I did think that George Bush, Colin Powell, and Les Aspin had a better grasp of what military action would mean than did religious leaders with their predictions of apocalyptic destruction.

Finally, Stan, you assume that I will join you in opposing all celebration of "victory" (your quotes). I'm not at all sure of that. I will continue to warn, as I have relentlessly warned, against the temptations of national hubris. I will continue to point out that we are a nation "under God," which means under transcendent judgment. I will continue to caution that no world order will be free from the radical disorder of sin, and no hope for earthly peace should be confused with the saving peace that is ours in Christ. God willing, there will be something like a "new world order" that will restrain the violence to which politics among nations is prone. To be sure, it will be partial and it will be only for a time, but I would like to

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think that you join me in prayer that it will be.

I do expect, however, that there will be a victory in the sense that, in this military conflict, one side will win and the other will lose. And because the outcome I expect will be the vindication of a just cause against a great wrong, I will be immensely grateful. Feelings of gratitude will be tempered by grief over the suffering and death on both sides, but it will be gratitude nonetheless.

When I am grateful, I know the need to give thanks. I am sure I will give thanks in the company of other thankful people, and no doubt it will look very much like a celebration. We will gather as Christians *and* as citizens, uneasy as always about the tension between the two. Despite everything, maybe you will be there, too, and once more we can tell one another the stories of the City of God, in which alone is our peace.

Your brother in Christ,
Richard

Olive Bed

"There was a bole of an olive tree with long leaves growing
Strongly in the courtyard, and it was thick, like a column.
I laid down my chamber around this."
The Odyssey, Book XXIII

Where but in bed does the world begin,
Where man and woman know, like children,
By touch and taste, by gentlest summons

Or sudden ache, the knowledge packed
In chilly seeds buried in earth,
The route to brightness mapped through buds,

The sure unfurling from winter's branch
Of blossom and leaf? Here, at fountains
Springing from darkness, the couple sips

A deep refreshment. Rooted and branching,
Marriage plumbs its underground,
Dense with ghosts, and combs the wind

In open air. Fruit swells and ripens,
Firm in its skin, perfecting sweetness
As nibbled pears or a cradled child

Deep in a tick in a prairie cabin, settled
On rugs rolled out on sand, or couched on skins
Stretched firm across an olive trunk.

Thick as a column, its foliage cut,
Its surface planed with tempered adze,
Trued straight to chalklines, carved into posts

And gilt with silver, gold, and ivory,
Strung with thongs and spread with pelts,
Immovable from its private chamber

And native soil, the rooted bed
Holds hero and heroine, two strong swimmers
Matching strokes toward the longed-for cove.

Robert Schultz

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Review Essay

1492 and All That

Robert Royal

THE CONQUEST OF PARADISE: CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND THE COLUMBIAN LEGACY. By KIRKPATRICK SALE. *Alfred A. Knopf. 453 pp. $24.95.*

As every schoolchild knows, Christopher Columbus, a Genoese navigator, discovered America in 1492. Or perhaps it would be better to say that every schoolchild used to think these were the facts about the European arrival in these lands. For several years now, a chorus of voices (growing larger and louder as we approach the 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage in 1992) has assaulted every certainty, except the date, about the Columbus story. Some want to de-emphasize Columbus preemptively by establishing that the Vikings were here first. Others would convince us that Columbus or Colón or Colombo (or whatever his name may have been) in fact was—take your pick—Spanish or Portuguese, Greek or Jewish, and far from being a navigator, before he set sail for the New World had never commanded a ship "larger than a rowboat." Still others, by far the most numerous and ideologically strident, wish to monopolize public attention with claims that Columbus' discovery of America is in any case nothing to celebrate.

Even the word "discovery" has been ruled out of the official celebration of the anniversary by some of the principal participants. When Spain first began planning for the commemoration of its role in the New World, it set out to defuse reactions from Native Americans and others who regard the very idea of the discovery of America as evidence of continuing cultural imperialism. In their view the native populations had no need to be discovered. Seeking a more neutral term, therefore, Spanish officials and their New World collaborators scoured the softer side of contemporary culture and hit upon the idea of 1492 as *El Encuentro*, the Encounter of Two Worlds.

In itself, seeing 1492 as the meeting of two different cultures has a certain merit. At the very least, it points to something in what William Carlos Williams once called "the American Grain," something often overlooked: the continuing presence of native cultures in our hemisphere, particularly in certain parts of Latin America. But some of the natives themselves refused to accept such a compromise. The South and Meso-American Indian Information Center (SAIIC), for example, a self-described liaison between Indian peoples of the North and of the South, and between Indians and non-Indians, recently issued "A Call to Action!" that included the following:

> We ask the Spanish government, the Vatican, and all Latin American and European governments who are promoting the Quincentennial Jubilee how the steamrolling of cultures for the enrichment of a European minority can be considered an "Encounter of Two Worlds." . . . The myths about Columbus and the "encounter" are a completely false manipulation of history.

Sympathetic persons are further requested to send contributions to the SAIIC offices in that natural seat of South and Meso-American concern, Berkeley, California, to help spread the word about the most evident consequences of Columbus' invasion: "genocide, torture, political, ideological, and cultural submission and death through diseases brought to the continent. Our land and our resources have been and continue to be plundered. Military, ideologic, economic, and religious power are the instruments of domination in this conquest."

As this excerpt so graphically shows, what began as an attempt to bring about a more equal appreciation of the two cultures involved in the Columbus commemoration quickly turned into the occasion for an acrimonious and moralistic assault on European and North American societies. Few major American institutions are willing to defend themselves against this kind of barrage. On the contrary, many have expressed their support for the full range of the indictments being brought here. Even the churches, who might be thought to be commanded to bring their good news to new peoples, cannot seem to find any good in the spread of Christianity to the Americas. In fact, only the American Catholic bishops to date have been willing to praise that admittedly flawed evangelization. More typically, the *conquistadores* and their descendants are charged with atrocities and genocide. Moreover, for many of the critics, genocide and rape—of women, of the land, of culture—continue to this day as the dark heart of both North and South.

ROBERT ROYAL *is John M. Olin Fellow in Religion and Society and Vice President for Research at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.*

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A powerful formulation of this view has recently been offered by Kirkpatrick Sale in his book *The Conquest of Paradise: Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Legacy*. Sale, it should be noted, is not a professional historian but an environmental activist, a codirector of the E. F. Schumacher Society, and a founder of the New York Green Party. His view of Columbus is likely to have a serious influence on the Quincentennial because of his stylistic and analytical skills (and it will not hurt that the book is a selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club).

The true story of Columbus the man, his voyages, and his legacy has its sickening side. Here was a daring sailor and adventurer who was certainly a visionary, but at the same time a man with serious flaws. He was, moreover, the product of a culture in turmoil. His story is a tragic one, combining as it does the highest and the lowest human qualities. But there is nothing in the story so offensive as Kirkpatrick Sale's unremitting bile in the telling of it. Though Sale writes vividly and with learning, he is also sneering and contemptuous, skeptical of anything that reflects well on Columbus and finally credulous about every evil attributed or attributable to him.

In Sale's account, Columbus comes upon a gentle tribe during his first landing. These innocents he brutalizes and infects with diseases brought from Europe. Within a short while the entire Spanish project resembles in the large what Columbus had begun in small.

Sale then turns to North America and finds the English doing precisely the same things as the Spanish, but without even the occasionally saving antislavery activities of someone like the Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas and without the Spaniards' relatively progressive willingness to intermarry with the Indians. The British were not only brutal but racist to boot.

The opposition of noble savages (NS) to savage Western Civilization (SWC) is by now a commonplace of our culture. The basic path to this opposition was originally laid down by Montesquieu, and later perfected by Rousseau, about two and a half centuries ago, and has since branched out in several directions, pitting East Indians, Black Africans, Communist Chinese, revolutionary Cubans, Sandinista Nicaraguans, and Native Americans against evil Westerners. But Kirkpatrick Sale achieves a new high water mark in the purity of his NS and the utter blackness of his SWC.

For example, the NS at the time of Columbus' landing not only, according to him, lived in social harmony amidst a natural abundance of food and other necessities, but it appears that they inhabited a kind of prelapsarian garden where disease itself was virtually unknown.

> One reason that the Indian populations, in the Caribbean as elsewhere, were so vulnerable to diseases of any kind is that, to an extraordinary extent, the Americas were free of any serious pathogens. The presumed passage of the original populations across the Bering Strait tens of thousands of years before served to freeze to death most human disease carriers except a few intestinal ones, it is thought, and there were apparently none established on the continents previously, so in general the Indians enjoyed remarkably good health, free of both endemic and epidemic scourges. As Henry Dobyns says in his examination of aboriginal North American populations, *Their Numbers Became Thinned*, "People simply did not very often die of illnesses" before the Europeans came.

As for these Europeans, they are portrayed by Sale—leaning heavily on the engraving tool—as the carriers of a culture of death. Some innocents nowadays might think of the early sixteenth century as the time of Reformation and Counter-Reformation, the Renaissance, and a march toward fuller humanism, but in Sale's view they would be deceived. Further, where such people might see complexity or ambiguity, Sale finds no more than a monolith that has survived basically unchanged through the intervening centuries, "a Europe that in thought and deed was estranged from its natural environment and had for several thousand years [!] been engaged in depleting and destroying the land and waters it depended on, and justifying that with one or another creed or conviction." Thus Sale lays much of the blame for Western ecocide on biblical impulses, but he is willing to be ecumenical, after a fashion. Western civilization was deeply ill, in his view, even before the advent of the anti-natural spiritual movements derived from the Bible.

For Sale, Europe's divorce from nature made it rootless and restless, sick and unstable, powerful but hollow. His Columbus is the very incarnation of all of these qualities—not a daring seaman with a vision of which even he himself was not fully conscious, but a man without family or community ties, ready to sail anywhere because nothing constrained him or moved him to loyalty. His motives, insofar as identifiable motives drive such a deeply disturbed man, involved early capitalist greed and late-Renaissance ambition for power and status. Sale finds his evidence for this in Columbus' meager descriptions of the flora and fauna of the New World, in which it becomes clear that he has no idea of—let alone any interest in—what he is looking at.

Nor did the Europe of Columbus' time react to his discovery with curiosity and wonder: "Certainly there was no intellectual explosion, nothing that 'caused Europe to realize that the perimeters of their world were changing' and 'to reevaluate their concept of the world' (as a recent study has put it)." Insofar as they

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looked up at all from their constant preoccupation with evil and death, the Europeans saw the new lands merely as wealth to be exploited. The right to colonization was assumed by Christian intruders who missed

> an opportunity for a dispirited and melancholy Europe to have learned something about fecundity and regeneration, about social comeliness and amity, about harmony with the natural world. The appropriate architecture for Colón to have envisioned along these shores might have been a forum, or an amphitheater, or an academy, perhaps an auditorium or a tabernacle; instead, a fortress.

Writing from the relative security of the Empire State, Sale is prodigal in his advice to the Spanish explorers. To make his case, however, he has to tiptoe carefully around several rather large facts. Columbus may have found a relatively pacific people, the Tainos, scattered thinly around the island where he first made landfall. Even the idyllic portrait of this tribe, however, is suspect since, as Sale admits, they had "displaced" an earlier people, the Guanahacabibes. (Perhaps "displacing" is different from conquering in a way that Sale does not feel obliged to make absolutely clear.)

After a brief survey of Columbus' sins against these and other tribes, and some highly speculative psychobiography that leaves the navigator a malignant psychopath, however, Sale hurries off to chronicle the outrages of the British and the French in North America.

It is not entirely by chance, one suspects, that Sale drops the Spanish story where he does; otherwise, we might find out some inconvenient facts about the native cultures encountered by the first Spaniards in the New World. Indeed, it is crucial to his method that he restricts himself to comparing selected portions of the entire European culture—like any human culture a foul rag and bone shop—with isolated pockets of American native life. If we take a comparable slice of one of the larger and higher cultures of America, though, the easy identifications of the devils and the angels fall to pieces. And we may be inclined to think that for all their faults, maybe the Spaniards had reasons to build fortresses rather than amphitheaters.

A large body of archaeological material has appeared recently that is gradually confuting idealized attempts to portray the tribes of native Americans as innocents in harmony with nature. The peaceful and colorful murals of the Mexican artist Diego Rivera, for example, which are enjoying a renewed appreciation as the anniversary approaches, may be pleasing art, but they are bad history. Rivera's paintings portray exactly what many people would like to believe was pre-Columbian America: vistas of fertile plains standing between breathtaking mountains; gaily dressed Indian peasants bending over neatly arranged plots of corn; community life steeped in the rhythm of the seasons, religious festivals, and songs. In short, an America before machines and automobiles, cities and suburbs, with their alleged alienation and cultural vacuity. Now, nostalgia for earlier, supposedly simpler, times is a perennial theme in human thought, but in few cases has this nostalgia for what never was sailed wider from reality than in that of the Americas.

The Nobel-prize-winning Mexican poet Octavio Paz has written some of the most lucid and accessible essays on pre-Columbian civilization in Mexico. Paz is not only an intelligent and graceful writer but has great affection for both parts of his dual heritage as a Mexican: the Spanish and the Indian. The town he grew up in consisted of the usual seventeenth-century Spanish Baroque convents and nineteenth-century buildings. But these stirred his imagination far less than the small Indian pyramid he and friends discovered while on a picnic one day. Thus he is able to bring pre-Columbian culture genuinely alive.

Paz describes the Mesoamerican Indian culture as a world of city-states perpetually at war with one another under the leadership of kings who proclaimed themselves divine. War, in such circumstances, was important for several reasons, not least because it provided prisoners who might be sacrificed either on the altar on in a ritual ball game. Kirkpatrick Sale may write glibly of a European culture of death, but some high Indian cultures, like the Aztecs and Mayans, were far more openly cults of blood and death than anything the Old World ever had to offer:

> The religious foundation common to all the Mesoamerican peoples is a basic myth: the gods sacrificed themselves to create the world; the mission of the human being is to preserve the universal life, including his own, feeding the gods with the divine substance: blood. This myth explains the central place of sacrifice in Mesoamerican civilization. Thus, war is not only a political and economic dimension of the city-state but a religious dimension.

As divinities of some kind themselves, the king and his queen were also expected to shed their own blood for cyclical renewal of the cosmos and the harvest. An elaborate system of rituals grew up in which the king practiced bloodletting on himself—among the Maya this was often from his penis—and the queen also shed blood into a basin, usually from her tongue (which was pierced and a rope passed through it). In war, one of the principal aims was to capture enemies who might be sacrificed later, their hearts cut out and offered to the gods of war and fertility. The Indians thought that without blood offerings, the balance of nature would be upset and monstrous beings would emerge from the darkness and tear the cosmos apart. Amidst the various changes in style and personalities

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over the centuries, the underlying cyclical pattern of cosmic order remained pretty much the same.

These well-known facts are unlikely to cause any ideological recalibrations in places like Berkeley. But we can imagine what a modern "hermeneutic of suspicion" would say if the Spanish kings of the period had required human sacrifice to preserve their world and rule, as all evidence shows the Aztec and Mayan kings did. But odd double standards are brought to bear on these issues even in such useful and lucid historical accounts as David Carrasco's recently published *Religions of Mesoamerica*, where the astronomy, art, and other cultural achievements of native culture are heavily emphasized while its darker aspects are treated as some sort of odd aberration. Carrasco goes so far as to rebuke the Spaniards, even the best of them, for thinking that they needed to convert the natives from their traditional religions. The Spaniards saw human beings dismembered, decapitated, and sacrificed amidst sacred serpents and drew the conclusion that the Indians were worshipping demons in a fashion similar to the abominations denounced in the Old Testament. The modern reader may judge what under the circumstances his or her own reactions might have been, over and above any explanation of the Indian belief in the need to preserve natural cycles by such practices.

Mircea Eliade has shown with some force that this cyclic pattern is common to most archaic societies. Those of us who live in the "historical" time of the West that is the direct result of the unfinished story of the Bible have great difficulty believing that history proper does not exist among most other peoples. There are chronicles, primarily of the cycles of creation-destruction-creation bound up with war and bloodshed, i.e., with both reality and myth. But of history proper, such a system knows nothing in theory or in practical life.

For Paz and other scholars, isolation from outside influences not only created stagnant social forms in Mesoamerica, but doomed the Native Americans whom the Spaniards encountered. Beyond their technical advantages, the Spaniards had cultural advantages in that they quickly understood the Indian religious, political, and social systems. Cortés and his men were liberators from political tyranny and tribute exacted in human lives. Several thousand Indians joined the *conquistadores* in their assault on Mexico City precisely for such reasons. It is not an exaggeration to say that, in God's Providence, these highly unworthy Spanish vessels also became the bearers of a sort of liberation theology.

By contrast, the Aztecs had no way to conceptualize who and what the Spaniards were. As is well known, Montezuma was terrified by an ancient prophecy that predicted the empire would be conquered by gods coming from where the sun rises (by an odd historical coincidence, the prophecy also specified the exact year the Spaniards landed on the Mexican coast). Native thought only allowed two categories of beings: gods and men. And the men were divided only between those belonging to their sedentary civilization and those outside, the barbarians. The Spaniards did not fit entirely into either category, with the result that the Native American tradition was of little help in confronting them.

Even before the arrival of Cortés, however, the lack of contact with fresh influences had crippled Indian culture. While some remarkable art and architecture was produced over more than a millennium of Indian civilization, there were no fresh impulses, such as had occurred elsewhere on the globe, that would lead to the development of metals and the wheel, or the training of animals for agricultural work. Whatever evils the Spaniards eventually introduced—and they were many and varied—they at least cracked the age-old shell of a culture admirable in many ways but pervaded by atrocities and petrification that should be repugnant to any modern person. Anyone who wishes to defend the rights of surviving Indian tribes and help preserve their cultures—two noble undertakings—must nevertheless be aware of what should and should not be retained from their heritage. A sentimental belief in the equal validity of all cultures leads necessarily to defense of such practices as sacrificial murder.

For Octavio Paz, the encounter between these two worlds has an element of fatal tragedy. "For two thousand years, the cultures of Mesoamerica lived and grew by themselves; their encounter with *the other* was too late and in conditions of terrible inequality. For that reason, they were demolished." As much as we may regret many of the subsequent events that occurred, it would have taken some sort of superhuman prescience and virtue on the part of the Spaniards to help the natives evolve peacefully toward a culture integrated with their own. This happened neither in North nor South America, in British India nor French Vietnam. The encounter of two civilizations—especially when they are of widely differing cultural character—may involve more complexities than mere human intelligence and good will can control.

The record clearly shows as much. The most vivid eyewitness document of the first encounters is Bernal Diaz del Castillo's remarkably vigorous *Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva España* (*True History of the Conquest of New Spain*). Diaz del Castillo was one of the *conquistadores* who came ashore with Cortés and is, therefore, approached with suspicion by a certain type of historian. Why his account of events should be approached with greater skepticism than those of others, however, is not clear: Diaz del Castillo may not be a completely reliable source, but he is far less biased than many of his detractors. He was moved to write initially, he says, by the false accounts of the earliest historians. As he

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says about the heroic chronicle of the Conquest by one uncritical enthusiast, "When I had read it, I found that the whole was a misrepresentation, and also that in his extraordinary exaggerations of the numbers of the natives, and of those who were killed in the different battles, his account was utterly unworthy of belief. We never much exceeded four hundred men, and if we found such numbers bound hand and foot, we could not have put them to death." Instead, he tries to describe accurately Cortés' real strengths as well as his many weaknesses as these appeared to a simple but shrewd member of the Spanish conquerors.

He also speaks credibly of the natives. Like many of his companions, Diaz del Castillo marvels at the achievements of the Aztecs and regrets that, as he writes, many had been destroyed. But he also shows other elements to be present. Though some of the picture is unflattering to groups now weakened by centuries of mistreatment and neglect, we should not let this lead us to lose sight of the reaction any Spaniard, or any of us now, would have had to some elements of Indian civilization. Even in the small villages they enter, human sacrifice is widespread. When Cortés is offered gifts of friendship by one tribe, for example, he asks sincerely that they first give up worshipping idols by these sacrifices. Diaz del Castillo adds: "For every day our sight was offended by the repetition of four or five of these horrid murders, the unfortunate victims being cut up and their limbs sold in the public markets, as beef is in the towns of Old Castille." Each time the Spaniards conquer a new town and the inhabitants flee, they come upon, with the same regularity that they report on architecture or food or weapons, the blood and bones of young men recently sacrificed.

The Indians were not much easier on their women. Diaz del Castillo reports, clearly with some titillation, on how batches of young ladies, some of them the nieces and daughters of Indian leaders, are presented to the conquerors as gifts. (The Spaniards usually require these ladies to undergo baptism before they accept them, a bizarre but not entirely cynical practice.) To be sure, women did occupy important posts in Aztec society; they were also at times treated like chattel. The Spaniards may have collaborated in practices of the latter sort for less than savory reasons. It is clear that they would not have treated their own wives and daughters in Spain in the same way.

All of which is not simply to say that the Europeans were superior to the natives, but to point out that each of the two cultures in this "encounter" had a very mixed record. If the Indians showed certain cultural strengths, the Spaniards and English and French did bring to them some universal ethical principles, like the ending of human sacrifice. Both Indians and Europeans practiced slavery, and any serious reflection on the relations between Native Americans and Europeans shows that, like much in the history of the human race, deep tragedy marches apace with great glory.

The Columbus celebration, however, seems destined to be observed in some quarters by the telling of simpleminded morality tales. The obvious intellectual power and graceful prose of a Kirkpatrick Sale, for example, is wasted on vapid conclusions like this:

> There is only one way to live in America, and there can be only one way, and that is as Americans—the original Americans—for that is what the earth of America demands. We have tried for five centuries to resist that simple truth. We resist it further only at the risk of the imperilment—worse, the likely destruction—of the earth.

From ample evidence, we know that the various tribes of American natives did not all live the same way. Some tribes are attractive to us, others are not. Nor were all of them equally successful ecologists. Recent surveys of a Mayan site, for example, have shown signs of something probably often repeated in native society: deforestation, soil erosion, disease, and the consequent dispersal of a once flourishing urban ceremonial center. We may admire the natives' feelings about nature, but as G. K. Chesterton once remarked (and native history proves), worship of nature quickly leads to what is unnatural.

Life at the end of the twentieth century is in some ways hard, and sources of light seem few. Since the future is unknowable, it is natural that we all turn to the civilizations of the past for enlightenment. When we do so, however, we must be ready to look honestly at the record. With respect to the Native Americans, to do anything less is to practice the final imperialism: a redefinition of the historical facts to fit our own categories. There are no perfect societies in America's or any other region's past. Any attempt to return to such a fiction, therefore, is a flight both from truth and from responsibility.

But the most ominous feature of such flights is the sharp alienation from our common American culture that they reflect. If Columbus was a wicked and rootless wanderer because he found no home in late fifteenth-century Spain, what are we to say of his modern detractors, who can find absolutely nothing good in their own science, technology, religion, social arrangements, and industry? Or to adapt an observation made by one of the primary creators of that bad Old World culture, if the critics cannot love their neighbors, whom they have seen, how can we rely on their love of the noble savage, whom they have not seen? FT

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Books In Review

Alasdair MacIntyre's University

Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry. By Alasdair MacIntyre. *University of Notre Dame Press. 241 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by **Mark R. Schwehn**

Over the course of the last five years or so the quality of philosophical inquiry into both ethical and religious matters has increased significantly. Martha Nussbaum's *The Fragility of Goodness* (1986), Jeffrey Stout's *Ethics after Babel* (1988), and Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self* (1989) are three of several major works that have renewed and deepened the concerns within contemporary intellectual life about who we are, how we ought to live, and which religious claims we ought to believe.

Nor are these very different thinkers working in isolation from one another. Nussbaum, a self-proclaimed pagan (she says she prefers the polytheism of the Greeks to the monotheism of the Jewish and Christian traditions), has given extensive and appreciative attention to Taylor's avowedly Christian views. And Taylor has written what Nussbaum regards as the best critical review of her work, prompting her to compose a lengthy response to him in her newest book, *Love's Knowledge* (1991), on the subject of "transcending humanity." In the meantime Stout, a nontheist, devotes much of his book to sustained and careful engagement with the works of theologians like James Gustafson. Religious questions are gradually returning to a prominent position on the agenda of the academy.

Mark R. Schwehn *is Dean of Christ College at Valparaiso University.*

Alasdair MacIntyre has done more than any other contemporary philosopher to advance and direct this salutary development. An erstwhile relentless critic of all theological discourse, MacIntyre has more recently become a formidable apologist for the Thomistic tradition of philosophy that "accommodated Augustinian claims alongside Aristotelian theorizing in a single dialectical enterprise." A substantial part of the resurgent philosophical interest in religious matters has developed by way of critical responses to MacIntyre's *After Virtue* (1981) and its sequel *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988). MacIntyre has thereby established the terms even if he has not altogether settled the outcome of the current academic conversation about the relationship between religion and ethics.

In his 1988 Gifford Lectures, recently published by Notre Dame Press as *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry,* MacIntyre devotes considerable attention to the significance of his work for the contemporary university. He begins by locating the Gifford lectureship itself within a set of practices and beliefs that belong to a "vanished and vanquished" world whose outlines were fully articulated in the Ninth Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1875). The "guiding presupposition" that informed Adam Gifford and those from among his contemporaries who authored the many entries of the *Britannica* does indeed seem quaint by present standards. They believed that "substantive rationality is unitary, that there is a single, if perhaps complex, conception of what the standards and the achievements of rationality are, one which every educated person can without too much difficulty be brought to agree in acknowledging."

After he contrasts this encyclopaedic version of moral inquiry to Nietzsche's genealogical version, MacIntyre proceeds to elaborate and explain the development of the Thomistic version of moral inquiry as it arose from the intellectual conflicts between Augustinians and Aristotelians at the University of Paris during the thirteenth century. After then rehearsing the dissipation of the Thomistic version of unified inquiry into congeries of sometimes competing but mostly disparate theses, modes of argument, and problems, MacIntyre criticizes both the encyclopedic and the genealogical traditions. He demonstrates that, by their own respective standards of rationality, they have in certain crucial respects failed.

The post-Thomistic chapters are, in my judgment, the most successful parts of the book. The contrast developed between the dialectical synthesis achieved by Aquinas and the dissolution of that synthesis into scholastic philosophy (in the pejorative sense of that term) is both compelling and instructive. Much of the instruction derives from MacIntyre's close comparison of scholasticism to the situation of philosophy at the present time. His subsequent critiques of encyclopaedists and genealogists enact exactly what MacIntyre has repeatedly described as the only way of demonstrating the superiority of one tradition to another one. Such superiority "is held to reside in [that tradition's] capacity not only for identifying and characterizing the limitations and failures of a rival tradition as judged by that rival tradition's own standards, limitations, and failures, . . . but also for explaining and understanding those failures in some tolerably precise way." So, for example, MacIntyre shows how the apologists for Paul de Man, in seeking to show that de Man's writings should be construed as repudiations of his earlier anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi ones, must consistently appeal to conceptions of self, moral credibility, and moral accountability that they, following the genealogical tradition and de Man, otherwise disavow. This extended episode provides but one of several illustrations of how and why genealog-

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ically oriented deconstructionists must finally reconstruct themselves along lines provided by an alternative tradition.

UNFORTUNATELY, MacIntyre's concluding chapter, in which he seeks directly to advance his own constructive project, is the least persuasive part of the book. MacIntyre endeavors to reconceive the modern university along lines that proceed directly from his earlier description of the encyclopaedic, the genealogical, and the Thomistic versions of moral inquiry. He recommends nothing less than the construction of "a twentieth-century version of the thirteenth-century university, especially the University of Paris, the university in which Augustinians and Aristotelians each conducted their own systematic enquiries while at the same time engaging in systematic controversy." This "twentieth-century version" of the medieval university would be organized around MacIntyre's three rival moral traditions, so that students and faculty would have to spend most if not all of their lives at the university becoming initiated into the conflicts among these incommensurable traditions.

This program cannot be realized for reasons that MacIntyre himself has elsewhere put forward. Current academic conflicts, even the conflicts among moral philosophers, do not conform to the tripartite division that MacIntyre has developed. Consider only the three philosophers mentioned at the outset of this review. Nussbaum is certainly an Aristotelian of sorts, but her moral philosophy takes on its own peculiar character from her readings of Greek tragedy and modern novels. She cannot by any stretch of each of the three traditions MacIntyre has described be included comfortably within any one of them. Stout is a self-proclaimed *bricoleur* in moral philosophy. He borrows readily from any and all of the three traditions MacIntyre has described and from others as well, so he would resist on principle working exclusively within a single, systematic scheme of thought. Taylor, a co-religionist with MacIntyre, could, I suppose, be described as a Thomist, given the capaciousness of that tradition on MacIntyre's description of it. But this would have to be done by minimizing Taylor's Hegelian sympathies and by ignoring the fact that Taylor's wonderfully rich, historical account of the sources of the modern self is deeply appreciative of several features of that self that MacIntyre deplores. And Taylor is surely neither a genealogist nor an encyclopaedist.

In brief, the conflicts within the present-day academy are best understood as MacIntyre for the most part understands them himself, as a secular version of scholasticism. Those who doubt this might consult the February 14, 1991 issue of the *New York Review of Books*, which features an exchange of letters on the condition of the contemporary university. A reader of the letter from the literary critic and self-proclaimed "political and cultural leftist" Gerald Graff might think that Graff is an ally of MacIntyre, since he suggests that the curriculum of the university should "teach the conflicts." But the conflicts that Graff has in mind are very different from the ones MacIntyre subsumes under his three rival traditions. They are more like the ones that MacIntyre mentions in his long list of the "conflicts of the past within and between cultures." But Graff and his allies in this exchange would surely resist the notion that before they can profitably teach these latter conflicts they must first "confront another set of conflicts, that between the systematic interpretation of the past and its relationship to the present which are embodied in and justified in terms of the three versions of moral enquiry with which [MacIntyre] has been concerned."

MACINTYRE MIGHT well respond to all this by reminding me that his proposal is avowedly utopian and that my criticism represents the kind of complaint raised by "those men and women of affairs who look for immediate results" and who "pride themselves upon their pragmatic realism." Up to a point, this charge has merit. To fully engage MacIntyre's reconception of the university, one must go beyond the question of his scheme's practicality to that of its philosophical substance.

Let us suppose, for that purpose, that all or most of the conflicts that beset the contemporary academy can be profitably subsumed under MacIntyre's tripartite scheme. Let us further suppose that students and faculty can be given the time and the place to engage in the conflicts that MacIntyre recommends. Why should we suppose that these conflicts will be at all productive in the sense that they will lead their participants to make progress together toward the truth of matters? Why should we not rather suppose that they will destroy the university by dividing it into persistently warring camps over decisions of appointment, tenure, and other related issues? MacIntyre's own answers to these questions are at best evasive and at worst inconsistent with what he has elsewhere written. Moreover, these evasions and inconsistencies stem from the philosophical defects in his position *vis-à-vis* the university.

MacIntyre's answers are evasive when, after conceding that there must be a certain background of agreement in place before the foreground of conflict can proceed productively, he fails to specify the character of these agreements. "More needs to be said of course about both the agreements and the disagreements which would be necessary in the type of university I have envisaged," he writes. I believe that MacIntyre must evade this task precisely because, insofar as his descriptions of the three rival and incommensurable versions of moral inquiry have been successful, and insofar as moral argument must proceed from within one of these three traditions, MacIntyre cannot plausibly advance yet another set of norms for the conduct

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of disputes that transcends all three of them. If he were to attempt to do so, he would have to stand outside all three of the rival traditions, and he has argued forcefully and repeatedly that such a thing is impossible.

As a result of this dilemma, when MacIntyre does weakly and briefly attempt to describe a background of agreement, he is inconsistent. Thus, he writes that students ought to be taught to read "scrupulously and carefully in order to possess a text in a way which enables them to arrive at independent interpretative judgments. . . . And on the importance of teaching students to read in this way, adherents of rival and conflicting views *ought* to be able to agree, if only because it is only by means of such reading that rival interpreters are able to identify what it is about which they are in conflict." This seems plausible enough, but MacIntyre earlier insists, against Bloom, Bennett, and others who favor a Great Books curriculum, that "there is no way of either selecting a list of books to be read or advancing a determinate account of how they are to be read, interpreted, and elucidated which does not involve taking a partisan stand in the conflict of traditions." In other words, alleged "agreements" turn out upon closer inspection necessarily to be partisan positions wishfully imposed upon rivals. And this is true in fact as well as in theory, for the very "conflicts" that Gerald Graff wishes to teach involve ideological disputes about what texts we should read and how we should read them.

Indeed, MacIntyre's description of the alleged agreement among rival traditions about how to read texts turns out to be a slightly diluted version of what he earlier described as a distinctively Augustinian hermeneutic, one that was largely retained by Aquinas. He would have done better, I think, to admit this and to recognize this way of reading as part of a larger form of life possessed of moral as well as intellectual dimensions. He does insist in his chapter on the university that creative rational disagreement can take place only within communities constituted by the practice of both moral and intellectual virtues. And he notes earlier that with the dissolution of the Thomistic synthesis, "the Aristotelian connection between the intellectual and the moral virtues disappeared from view." His reconception of the university would have therefore been better had he argued for the retrieval in both theory and practice of this connection, had he consistently maintained that virtues like charity and humility, which are required for creative conflict, are religious in both origin and character, and had he tried to demonstrate the urgent necessity of this strategy. For without these virtues, the conflicts that

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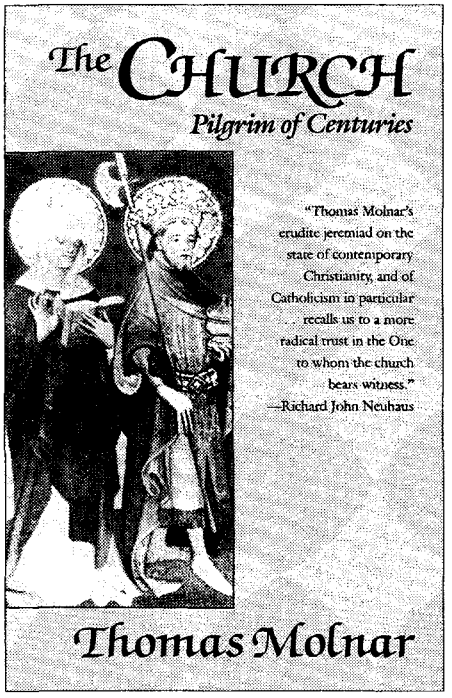
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MacIntyre recommends will be at best sterile and at worst the sounds of learned armies clashing by night.

Evangelical Growth and Politics in Latin America

IS LATIN AMERICA TURNING PROTESTANT? THE POLITICS OF EVANGELICAL GROWTH. By DAVID STOLL. *University of California Press. 424 pp. $24.95.*

TONGUES OF FIRE: THE EXPLOSION OF PROTESTANTISM IN LATIN AMERICA. By DAVID MARTIN. *Basil Blackwell. 352 pp. $32.95.*

Reviewed by **Joseph E. Davis**

ON THE MORNING of March 23, 1982, a group of young Guatemalan army officers brought a retired army general, Efrain Rios Montt, to power in a coup d'état. Rios Montt, an evangelical Protestant and member of the Word Church, was president of a Catholic country in Catholic Latin America. The U.S. media sat up and took notice. More recently, another election in Guatemala as well as elections in Colombia and Peru have again brought Latin American Protestants into the media limelight. In the latter country, massive evangelical participation in Cambio 90 ("Change 90") fueled the upset victory of Alberto Fujimori (a practicing Catholic) as President. The gains for the evangelicals included the second Vice President, fourteen members of the lower house of Parliament, and four Senators.

Protestantism—mostly of the Pentecostal and conservative evangelical variety—has expanded in Latin America since the 1960s to an estimated 10 percent of the population. This is a change of enormous magnitude for Latin America, but because of their as yet minor political role, Protestants south of the Rio Grande have received little publicity in this country. The vanguard of religious change is assumed to reside with the "liberation" struggle, led by the radical wing of the Catholic Church. The import of the Protestant movement is assessed positively or negatively to the degree that it is seen either to further or hinder the liberation agenda. In this light, it is generally characterized as a retrograde movement of minor consequence.

IN Latin America, however, the Protestant expansion has gained the attention of the Catholic hierarchy, the liberation theologians, and the secular left. For these three parties, the phenomenal success of the Pentecostals and evangelicals with the poor has raised especially vexing questions. Although the questions for each are different, all have, in various ways and at various times, posited a similar theory to explain the Protestant attraction and organizational achievement.

The "invasion of the sects" theory begins with the premise that evangelical growth is not a genuinely popular movement but rather the result of external agents, i.e., North American missionaries and money. Many go further and suggest that the U.S. government is actually the source of the funds, using evangelicals to advance its political interests. A 1984 pastoral letter on ecumenism by the bishops of Panama, for example, cites an article in *Vida Nueva* that attributes to Nelson Rockefeller the view that "it was very useful for United States policy to strengthen conservative sects" since the Catholic Church had ceased to be a trustworthy ally and guarantor of social stability (needless to say, the 1969 Rockefeller Commission report cited recommended no such policy). Even a 1986 Vatican report on "Sects or New Religious Movements: Pastoral Challenge," in its discussion of the conditions that mediate the rise of new religious movements, includes among the significant elements powerful "external economic and political factors." One commentator has suggested that this reference, not otherwise elaborated on in the document, can be read as an "oblique nod to the conviction in some Latin American church circles that the spread of Pentecostal and conservative evangelical churches in that area is a covert extension of American foreign policy."

DAVID STOLL, in *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?*, argues that while such explanations are "inadequate," the fears they reflect are "well-founded." The burden of his book is to demonstrate that Protestantism in Latin America does not have "predictable political implications," that it is a "generator of social change whose direction is not predestined." In a situation of continuing economic deterioration, Stoll believes, the evangelicals might be forced to broaden out from questions of personal morality to questions of social justice—a process already to be discerned in some evangelical circles. Hence it is just possible that a rapprochement might come to pass between the Pentecostals/evangelicals and their arch-competitors, the theologians of liberation. The clear and present danger to this desired evangelical evolution is, according to Stoll, the U. S. religious right with its propensity for confusing Christianity with American empire.

One is not quite sure what to make of a book whose goals are (1) to soothe those alarmed by evangelical growth by showing that its political impact is open-ended, while (2) dramatizing for Latin American evangelicals the danger of being yoked to the militaristic U.S. religious right. It is unlikely that either the evangelicals or those alarmed by them will appreciate the favor. The evangelicals themselves will be understandably slow to take guidance from a self-described (in the *Christian Century*) "secularized middle-class intellectual" who hears in liberation theology what

JOSEPH E. DAVIS *is a program director for a private foundation in Michigan. His articles on religious freedom issues have appeared in various publications.*

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he wants to hear about religion: "It harps on the struggle for social justice, not on hellfire and how to behave." Seemingly unable to maintain a respectful tone, Stoll, an anthropology student at Stanford, displays a marked lack of sympathy for, and understanding of, the evangelicals' religious concerns.

For those unnerved by evangelical growth, however, Stoll's analysis is unlikely to be soothing. Those in the liberation theology camp are told that they have frequently missed the actual needs of the poor and proposed solutions the poor could not live with, that they have generally worked to undermine popular religiosity, and that they are religious professionals with professional interests. As for the Catholic hierarchy, it is told that clerical authority is the key to understanding how the Church has inadvertently been provoking evangelical growth. According to Stoll, "what has flung open Latin America to evangelical Protestantism . . . is the Catholic Church's inability to decentralize its system of authority." Finally, both liberationists and Catholics are informed that as "Protestant churches become more Latin American"—a process very far advanced—"many have become more authoritarian and mystical, with leaders who remain under the spell of ever more reactionary North American mentors."

In *Tongues of Fire*, David Martin, a British sociologist of religion, comes at the issue of Protestant growth from a sociological perspective that is far more enlightening. His sociological considerations, centering on the cultural logic of evangelical Protestantism, cast great doubt on Stoll's proposition of an evangelical rapprochement with the liberation theologians. (The doubt grows as one considers the obvious theological differences between the liberationists and the evangelicals.) Paradoxically, addressing Latin American Protestantization at the cultural level rather than the political may provide the most important clues to the future direction that evangelical political involvement will take.

Martin's thesis is an application to the Latin American case (with comparisons to other areas as well) of a larger theory developed in his 1978 book, *A General Theory of Secularization*. Briefly, that theory argues that as modernity advances, religion and politics differentiate into specialized spheres with religion increasingly focused at the cultural level and on the personal concerns of individuals. In Latin America, Martin sees this process underway as the political and religious spheres, hitherto intertwined, are coming apart in the wake of rapid economic and social change.

Catholicism, with its tradition and organic approach to whole societies, resists this differentiation. By contrast, voluntaristic, enthusiastic, and participatory forms of Protestant religion, developed first by the Methodists in England and then in greater measure by their U.S. stepchild the Pentecostals, thrive precisely when religion focuses on the cultural/individual level. The attraction of Pentecostal and evangelical Christianity is most acute in those environments in which the preexisting social system has most thoroughly broken down—for example, in the shanty towns of Latin America's megacities, where Protestant Christianity offers new relationships in voluntary networks of mutual support, and among the most rootless of the poor, the millions of abandoned and mistreated women. Within the Protestant enclaves, elements of the classic Protestant ethic are realized, including family values, discipline, and sobriety.

The Pentecostals and evangelicals are culturally committed (if not always rhetorically so) to the differentiation of religious and political spheres. They seek the freedom that will allow them to practice their faith in peace and preach the Gospel without interference. They are highly suspicious of politics and of church-state arrangements. As Stoll demonstrates, even in the case of Rios Montt, the Word Church had not previously been politically active and the Word elders agonized over the question of Brother Efrain running for president in the 1982 elections (and finally advised against it). The operative view is that men of God should stick to the spiritual realm.

In point of fact, the Pentecostals and evangelicals have little to gain from either the right or the left in Latin America. Because the religious and political spheres remain interwoven in many societies, however, they are drawn into positions they might not otherwise choose. This frequently leads to false assessments of evangelical intentions, particularly the notion that they are bastions of the status quo. Although evangelicals are generally apolitical, they are not necessarily so. In Chile, for example, many evangelicals supported Allende's party. But it is especially their activity in the realm of culture that shows them not to be conservative stalwarts. Their deep aversion to violence, along with the domestic and religious values they aggressively inculcate and the role they are playing in the breakup of the Catholic Church's religious hegemony, add up to a revolution that bids to alter radically the face of Latin America.

Martin is rightly cautious about extrapolating from the Protestant impact in the most anomic situations to the whole of society and about predicting a revolution toward modern economic growth fueled by a new Protestant work ethic. Nonetheless, massive social change is underway; whatever its ultimate outcome, Latin America will be transformed.

In Martin's view, the evangelicals are opting out of the all-encompassing religious-political system that has obtained in Latin America, and they will not participate with those who seek a new comprehensive integration. In many ways, the

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liberation theologians share with the Pentecostals and evangelicals a Protestant ecclesiology, emphasizing decentralized authority and egalitarian participation. Unlike the Pentecostals/evangelicals, however, the liberationists share with both the Catholic Church and the secular Marxists—with whom they have historically concurred in their social analysis—the pretension to make all-inclusive claims, that is, to make statements about, and issue norms for, all of society. Evangelical Protestantism in Latin America, by contrast, lacks an overarching theory of society. Moreover, the evangelicals' intense focus on the local church, their fissiparous approach to leadership, the voluntary nature of their association, and their deep aversion to being co-opted by this-worldly concerns all preclude the establishment of a comprehensive Protestant framework.

GIVEN THE cultural logic sketched by Martin, what direction might social and political involvement by Pentecostals and evangelicals take in the years ahead? As we have seen, Stoll hedges his bet by emphasizing the open-ended nature of the evangelical proposition. He is surely correct in saying that the direction of Protestant political participation in Latin America is not "predestined." On the other hand, it may not be as open-ended as he suggests. Since the Protestantism that is so rapidly gaining adherents in Latin America comes by way of the United States, the political objectives of evangelicals in this country might shed some light on the goals that Latin American Protestants will seek in the political sphere in the immediate future.

One U.S. commentator has characterized the organized political involvement of evangelicals and fundamentalists in the United States in recent years as an "aggressive defense." Greatly concerned by limitations on religious freedom—e.g., the ban on prayer in public schools—and the sense that secular humanists (through the media, courts, public schools, and so on) were imposing on them, and especially on their children, a comprehensive ideology deeply at odds with their Christian faith, these evangelicals and fundamentalists have become active political players. It is true that most of the time these people function in the political process more or less like others of their status and situation. But in seeking to protect their families and faith communities by turning back destructive social and political tides, they adopt an aggressive and more organized role. Still, it is a role that is essentially defensive in nature.

THE PENTECOSTALS and evangelicals in Latin America are situated in a very different cultural environment, yet their participation in politics in the years ahead may follow a similar model: behaving politically on most issues like others of their status and situation but aggressively engaged with those issues that a defense of the family and religious community requires. In the Latin American setting, evangelical political activity can be expected to focus on greater religious freedom and social equality. This will likely involve—indeed, has already involved—at least two major outcomes.

First, where possible, aggressive steps will be initiated, or opportunities exploited, to eliminate state favoritism toward the Roman Catholic Church. In the recent Peruvian election, Cambio 90 parliament member Guillermo Yoshikawa Torres called fellow evangelicals to exercise their citizen's rights "with all conviction." "Discrimination will be eliminated," he wrote. "Our children will be able to study in the schools of our choice without having to keep our evangelical faith secret. . . . Our churches will enjoy exemptions and preferential tax rates, which the law grants now, but only on paper. [Our] pastors will enjoy the same privileges as other clergymen."

Second, anti-religious efforts by state authorities will be resisted. Although many evangelicals were supportive of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, others suffered at government hands and opposed the Sandinistas. Even among supporters, there was some resistance to Sandinista mass organizations and mandatory military service. Neither of the dual postures toward government taken by evangelicals—obey your earthly rulers; obey God rather than men—is absolute. The adoption of one or the other will tend to be read through the lens of religious freedom. In keeping with their divisions, however, the Nicaraguan experience suggests that evangelicals will not work as a united block even in this limited area. Finally, although Latin American Pentecostals and evangelicals do not cooperate with the Catholic Church, resisting state-initiated intolerance or discrimination is perhaps one area where at least some segments of the churches might make common cause.

IN GENERAL, the evangelicals will continue to agitate for the religious/political differentiation that is essential to the social space they need to practice their faith and to the breakup of the social system they have opted out of. Their longer-term strategy is to transform society from the bottom up. "Change the individual first," an evangelical in Ecuador told Stoll. "That will change the structure."

Given an "aggressive defense" posture by evangelicalism and the role that the Catholic Church plays in Latin America, what the Catholic Church does in the years ahead may play the largest part in shaping the scope and intensity of evangelical political activity. That activity is not predestined, but it may be heavily contingent. With the position on religious freedom adopted by the Catholic Church since Vatican II, it is hard to see how the Catholic Church can plausibly claim special status in the face of calls for non-discrimination. Nonetheless, the response (or responses) of the Catholic Church to the Protestant challenge is a truly open-ended proposition.

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What Crisis in the Black Church?

THE BLACK CHURCH IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE. By C. ERIC LINCOLN and LAWRENCE H. MAMIYA. *Duke University Press. 519 pp. $47.50 cloth; $18.95 paper.*

Reviewed by **R. Laurence Moore**

WHEN WE CUT through the many good reasons that lead social scientists to study religion, we find ourselves in the end confronting questions about politics. Whether subtly or straightforwardly, with explicit or only veiled references to the Marxian axiom that religion is an opiate, the analytical musings of the sociologist or the political scientist invariably direct us to conclude something about whether religion, especially in its organized forms, promotes or retards progressive social change. And historians have been almost obsessive in posing questions about the role of religion in encouraging or stifling populist cries of injustice. The debates on this issue among the social scientists are too long, too complicated, and too heated to review in full. However in opening a discussion of C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya's *The Black Church in the African American Experience*—a book that will surely be seen to be a landmark study—a little background may be useful.

Historians of the American experience have said some unkind things about both the sincerity and the effectiveness of the professed social conscience of Christian churches. Elaborating on an interpretation made in 1929 by H. Richard Niebuhr in *The Social Sources of Denominationalism,* many of them have noted that church denominations, like people, move up the social scale. When they arrive at middle-class status, it is often thought, their social vision is compromised by capitalist-influenced worries about such things as discipline, thrift, and social decorum. On the other hand, the "sects" that do not move up suffer a worse condescension. Of them it is complained that they preach to their flocks, usually drawn from the lower social ranks, a gospel of worldly defeatism. Religious consolation in the industrial age, we are told, comes at the high price of diverting attention away from the causes of economic oppression.

Nathan Hatch's important book *The Democratization of American Christianity* (1989) may signal some shift in this tide, but the notion that, even in the land of the free, churches succeed as institutions by first bending to, and eventually reinforcing, the social status quo is deeply implanted in the literature. A student reading through the most influential recent histories of the American working class might reasonably conclude that working-class militance was inversely related to church attendance.

AN IMPORTANT exception to this general practice can be found in the historical accounts of African-American churches. To be sure, certain highly gifted students of the African-American religious experience have been as harsh in arguing a case for the social regressiveness of black churches as any scholar bent on demonstrating that the social gospel preached in white pulpits intentionally masked the exploitation of the greedy money barons who paid the minister. For example, E. Franklin Frazier, whose *The Negro Church in America* is a classic in the field, offered a mixed assessment of his subject. But for him the downside was very far down indeed. The Black Church, he said, "aided the Negro to become accommodated to an inferior status," furthered a religion that was otherworldly in its outlook, "cast a shadow over the entire intellectual life of Negroes," and was responsible for the "so-called backwardness of American Negroes."

However, there is another view of the issue running through the literature, a view that deserves to be called the prevailing one—especially now, with an impressive boost from this present volume. First set forth by W. E. B. DuBois, then pushed by the white anthropologist Melville Herskovits and the white Marxist his-torian Eugene Genovese, and subsequently sustained in the work of such younger African-American scholars as John Blassingame, Albert Raboteau, and Margaret Creel Washington, it locates a tradition of African-American resistance in an

R. LAURENCE MOORE *is Professor of History at Cornell University and author of* Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans.

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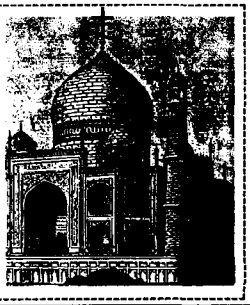

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innovative black Christianity. The churches fostered by this innovative Christianity were "churches of the disinherited" that served well their members' social and political needs.

Lincoln and Mamiya affirm that the seven major historic black denominations—the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Incorporated, the National Baptist Convention of America, Unincorporated, the Progressive National Baptist Convention, and the Church of God in Christ—historically played a liberating role for African-Americans. More important, the authors bear witness to the continuing effectiveness of that role in the present. The mood of the story they record is most definitely upbeat. Interestingly, Lincoln and Mamiya pay relatively little attention to the shaping of African-American Christianity by the slaves and whatever African past they were able to retain. Nor are they much interested in theological disputes, noting that the impetus for independent black churches did not arise from such differences. Their study concentrates instead on the social projects of the visible church institutions created by free black Americans.

SO STRONG IS the descriptive side of this study that readers can make use of it as an encyclopedia of factual information about organized black religion. The authors' intention is to produce a carefully empirical work—"to provide descriptive overviews and contemporary statistical data and information about black churches and clergy in seven historic black denominations." A nationwide survey begun in 1978, conducted by questionnaires and paid interviewers, collected data on 2,150 churches and elicited opinions from 1,895 clergy. Forty tables summarizing everything from the annual income of rural churches to the number of choirs in black churches are an essential part of the text.

Though a threat of blandness often hangs over books as loaded with statistical description as this one, Lincoln and Mamiya manage to keep things provocative. They are engaged, passionately so, with the implications of their findings, and their data are deployed to back up a set of related arguments. They maintain that black churches, taken together, have been in the past, and remain in the present, the most important and the best-managed economic and cultural units of African-American communities. They have maintained this preeminence by serving as considerably more than centers for religious worship—indeed, within African-American culture what is religious and what is secular have never been fully differentiated. Routinely, black churches have been intimately linked to political parties, insurance companies, burial societies, schools and colleges, even to theatrical groups.

This linkage of the sacred to the secular, according to Lincoln and Mamiya, is much more pronounced in the case of African-American churches than in the case of white churches. Unparalleled opportunities opened to African-Americans as a result of the civil rights struggles of the 1960s, and many of them for the first time discovered strategies for autonomous collective action that bypassed their churches. Even so, the only partial differentiation between the sacred and secular remains a distinctive feature of African-American life. Black churches, both urban and rural, continue to cooperate with other institutions in African-American communities, especially institutions linked to civil rights protest. In doing so, they provide African-Americans as effectively as any other agency with a sense of racial pride . As they always have done, they make freedom the focus of the gospel message, a message that never acquiesced in the social injustices practiced against black Americans.

IN THEIR INSISTENCE on this version of black history, the authors set out to demolish one or two books that they believe have completely misdirected research, most particularly Gary Marx's *Protest and Prejudice* (1967), a study that puts a Marxian gloss on the complaints about the black church registered by Frazier. They are far more respectful of Frazier himself, suggesting gently that had he lived to see the part that churches played in the civil rights movement of the 1960s (he died in 1962), he might have changed his mind. For analogous reasons, they are respectful of Benjamin May and Joseph Nicholson's *The Negro's Church*, first published in 1933. The passivity that Mays and Nicholson charge to black churches is not denied but interpreted as a mood peculiar to the interwar years, one that did not prevail earlier and that did not continue into the recent past.

There is no question, of course, about the central role of black churches in shaping the culture of African-Americans. Statistics about black churches, as Lincoln and Mamiya lament, are unreliable. However, scholars, aided by pollsters, can demonstrate with reasonable certainty that African-Americans are more attached to their churches than any ethnically identifiable group of white Americans. Seventy-eight percent of African-Americans claim to be churched, and of these, according to estimates of Lincoln and Mamiya, 80 percent belong to one of the independent black denominations covered in their survey.

These are, to be sure, impressive figures, but the conclusion to be drawn from them is far from self-evident. Readers can quickly calculate from the statistics that a lot of African-Americans are either unchurched, belong to largely white Protestant churches, or are part of religious movements that are left at the margins of this volume, such as Muslims, Roman Catholics, and various cultic movements of the sort once profitable to Daddy Grace and Father Divine. When we further remember that a large majority of the members of African-American churches are women, perhaps as high as 80 percent in some cases, we are apt to suspect that the community now encompassed by the independent black churches is less broad than

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the authors indicate. A similar problem, of course, besets white churches, some of which are in a much more obvious state of decline, but then white communities have staked relatively less of their well-being on their churches. The historic glory and the historic dilemma of the black churches come down to the same thing—their centrality.

It is always frustrating to see how many disputed issues statistics cannot settle. The survey numbers convince Lincoln and Mamiya that the civil rights struggles of the 1960s formed a watershed in the history of many black churches. The effect on African-American ministers and their congregations, they argue, was electric, galvanizing them to be far bolder in sponsoring and supporting protest, sometimes with their lives. Moreover, statistics also convince Lincoln and Mamiya that black churches are in much better shape than they were fifty years ago. Ministers are better educated, they are paid more, they preach to larger and more economically prosperous denominations, and they preside over a more elaborate network of social services tied to the financial structure of the church.

So far, so good. However, at this point the significance of the statistics must be filtered through more subjective categories. Lincoln and Mamiya treat the trends just cited as measures of health, and by any common sense reckoning they should be. But that same sort of reckoning also tells us that they measure the fading distinctiveness of black churches. Is that good or bad? Reliance on numbers will not help us to decide.

Lincoln and Mamiya acknowledge that the pluses come with some minuses. The educational level of African-American ministers is higher than it was, but not as high as that of the burgeoning African-American professional class, often trained in elite Ivy League institutions. As a result, the church's leadership role is threatened. The church's network of social services, while growing in absolute terms, is becoming in percentage terms a diminishing part of the network of social services created by African-Americans. Most ominous, the enhanced financial status of churched African-Americans (even members of the pentecostal Church of God in Christ have moved perceptibly up the social scale) has left a gaping gulf between "respectable" African-Americans and unchurched, inner city, poor African-American males. These men, who outnumber young African-American men in college, are unemployed, move regularly between drug-trafficking on the streets and prisons, and die with shocking frequency in blazes of gunfire.

No one expects African-American churches to deal effectively in the short run with the dispiriting problems of the inner city. To judge them by a failure that runs deep throughout American life and taints even the rosiest version of the American dream would be grossly unfair. However, it is not unfair to remain skeptical about whether black churches, on average, have been as effective in addressing community issues as this book suggests. Many of the statistics cited by the authors do not persuade one way or the other. For example—and one example will have to do—in their effort to efface "the stereotype of the Black Church as a withdrawn, insular, and privatized institution," the authors present data showing that about 71 percent of black urban churches say they have cooperated with social agencies in their communities or other non-church programs. The trouble with this datum is that it gives us an insufficient sense of the extent of the involvement—whether cooperation was limited to one or two instances, whether it was ongoing, whether it involved extensive donations of money and labor. Perhaps the cooperation was substantial, but the easy answer of Yes to the question posed by the survey does not mean very much. In fact, it does not indicate with any certainty a significantly greater level of "cooperation" than the answer No.

What is very clear is that the black churches that do the most community work these days are the largest and wealthiest ones and the ones with the most economically secure members (*pace* those who denigrate the middle class). Moreover, Lincoln and Mamiya demonstrate a strong correlation between the militance of African-American ministers, which the authors measure by a willingness to participate in protest marches, and the level of their education. The more education, the more militance. These are predictable connections, which are duplicated in the cases of many white Protestant denominations. However, the present economic conditions that enable "effective" militant action should give us pause over any claim about the historical political effectiveness of, let's say, a small black church that lacked the resources to pay a decent salary to a preacher with an eighth-grade education. This type of church was by far the most common in African-American history. How militant could it afford to be?

The doubt raised has nothing to do with the level of sacrifice made by church members. Every historical document at our command suggests an enormous commitment on the part of African-Americans to sustain their churches. Rather, the question is whether politically, even using the broad view of politics adopted by Lincoln and Mamiya, black churches did as much as they might have done to build a spirit of resistance among African-Americans. (Or perhaps the question is whether we should even attempt to measure the success of black churches with a political yardstick.) This question has no scholarly resolution, but it holds a lot of substance all the same. Consider one issue. The ministry of the black churches did not encourage anger. It is too simple to suggest that the opposite of "no anger" is merely cowering meekness. It is furthermore inappropriately glib for a white historian to argue that black churches should have sponsored self-defeating violence in the name of racial pride. Even so, did not the situation for many long decades call for anger?

Lincoln and Mamiya state in the beginning that "we use the term 'the

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Black Church' as do other scholars and much of the general public as a kind of sociological and theological shorthand reference to the pluralism of black Christian churches in the United States." This is certainly legitimate usage, and a major virtue of this volume is its clarification of the differences between the independent black Methodist, Baptist, and Pentecostal churches. However, pluralism is not its thematic center. Like many scholars of American religion, Lincoln and Mamiya approve of pluralism only when it can be bent to ecumenical purposes. They are aware, after all, that the point of view they seek to refute argues the case that there was *excessive* pluralism. That is, although African-Americans may have found strength and identity in church membership, they let themselves be divided into too many churches. The unfortunate result of black churches being the only available outlet for competition, this separatism isolated individual congregations, eroded their efforts to make common cause, and encouraged an authoritarian style in their ministers.

One prescriptive conclusion readers might draw from this volume is that the ideal Black Church of the future would combine the stable and upwardly mobile features of African-American Methodism (out of which grew the best organized of the black churches, the ones that kept the best records, and the ones that were the least "fundamentalist" in their approach to Christian doctrine) with the distinctive African-American emphasis on ecstatic participation that has been so profoundly a part of black pentecostalism. Such a church would not lose the middle classes, and it would not desert the poor. It would be "respectable," but in distinctive ways, some of them having to do with music, that did not copy white culture. The Black Church has not been everything that Lincoln and Mamiya claim. Nor can it become everything that they hope. However, such reflections do not negate the very real and truly astonishing achievements of the Black Church, nor the contributions of this indispensable book.

Across the Gulf of Faith

JEWISH PERSPECTIVES ON CHRISTIANITY. Edited by FRITZ A. ROTHSCHILD. *Crossroad. 363 pp. $29.50.*

Reviewed by **Matthew Berke**

THE INTERFAITH DIALOGUE between Christians and Jews has become such a familiar feature of contemporary religious life that it is hard to imagine a time when it was virtually unheard of. Yet this dialogue has existed in self-conscious form only since the end of World War II. *Jewish Perspectives on Christianity*, edited by Fritz A. Rothschild, presents essays and excerpts from larger works by five Jewish thinkers who were early participants in the dialogue—in some cases forerunners or precursors of the dialogue, in that their writings preceded institutional contact between the faiths. In any case, these five provided much of the intellectual basis (at least from the Jewish side) that ultimately made extensive interfaith discussion possible.

The selections here are taken from the writings of Leo Baeck, Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig, Will Herberg, and Abraham Joshua Heschel. Editor Rothschild has chosen well, and his introductory essay provides coherence and context to the volume. The collection as a whole has something of the feel of dialogue in that each of these Jewish thinkers is introduced in an essay written by a Christian theologian (J. Louis Martyn on Baeck, Ekkehard W. Stegemann on Buber, Bernhard Casper on Rosenzweig, Bernhard W. Anderson on Herberg, and John C. Merkle on Heschel). If this book does not keep pace with all the latest developments in Jewish thought on Christianity, it certainly has the virtue of bringing together in one volume some of the essential writings on the subject from an earlier era, without which current and future dialogue might easily become shallow and uninformed. Even a cursory review of these sources indicates their enduring power and value.

LEO BAECK (1873-1956), a liberal German Jew of the Kantian stripe, is famous for his distinction between Christianity as a "romantic" religion, emphasizing feeling and introspection, and Judaism as a "classical" religion, stressing rationality and ethics. Christianity is depicted by Baeck as an emanation of Judaism that lost sight of Judaism's purer and more universalistic truth. The comparison of Christianity and Judaism reads more as disputation than dialogue, and there is, as Louis Martyn points out, "a considerable amount of anger" beneath the surface of Baeck's writing, motivated by the misrepresentation of Judaism by German Christians in the academy and by the discrimination against Jews in Christian Europe.

But if Baeck is correct in defending Judaism against Christian misinterpretation, his own writings frequently misunderstand and misrepresent Christianity (though with less serious consequences for Christians than their misrepresentations have had for Jews). Baeck can certainly be accused of misreading particular historical manifestations of Christianity as its timeless and immutable essence. Nevertheless, his writings represent an early attempt in the modern period to put the two faiths on speaking terms, and even in some of his unbalanced formulations there is often more than a little truth. If his theoretical account of Christianity is less sympathetic and well-balanced than that of some other Jewish thinkers, he is not alone in making historical judgments on Christianity for its ethical failures. Martyn's tactful commentary on Baeck's thought blends sympathy with respectful criticism.

FRANZ ROSENZWEIG (1886-1929), another German and a contemporary of Baeck's, has a better understanding and more favorable view of Christianity (though he too criticizes it for its failure to bear more fully the

MATTHEW BERKE *is Managing Editor of* FIRST THINGS.

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ethical fruit of its religious promise). Rosenzweig himself nearly converted to Christianity, but decided against it after going through something like a revelatory experience while attending Yom Kippur services in 1913.

Rosenzweig is, in a sense, *the* key figure for the interfaith dialogue and special relationship that emerged years after his untimely death at age forty-three. Relying heavily on certain New Testament passages (in Romans 9-11), Rosenzweig worked out a theory of the "dual covenant" according to which God uses *both* the Christian church and the Jewish people as part of his plan to redeem the world. Christians are called to bring "the nations" into the divine covenant while the Jews are to remain faithful to their original covenant and vocation as witnesses. The title of Rosenzweig's opus, *The Star of Redemption*, expresses the relation of the two faiths: Judaism is the core that keeps the star hot and brilliant, while Christianity is represented by the rays that spread out to all peoples.

No one imagines that this conception is fully worked out or unproblematic, but believers from both faiths have found Rosenzweig's thought extremely fertile, with much promise as a basis for future dialogue. It has the obvious attraction of allowing Jewish affirmation of Christianity not merely as an aberrant form of Judaism but as a part of salvation history; Christians, on the other hand, can recognize the continuing religious validity of Judaism without sacrificing their own faith claims.

Rosenzweig's writing is complex, highly allusive, and generally difficult. And yet even in the short selections reprinted here, one cannot but be impressed by the author's vast learning and his penetrating mind. Rosenzweig is perhaps one of the great under-appreciated thinkers in modern philosophy and theology.

Martin Buber (1878-1965) is probably less celebrated for giving perspectives *on* Christianity than providing perspectives *for* Christians seeking to recover the Jewish roots of their own faith. The "Hebrew humanism" expressed in his writings enabled many non-Jews to penetrate to the heart of Jewish piety and spirituality as never before in the modern era. Not since Moses Mendelssohn (in the eighteenth century) had a Jew—*as a Jew*, not just a philosopher who happened to be of Jewish origin—had such an effect on the spiritual consciousness of the Christian world. Though Buber never fully accepted the practice of Jewish law and ritual (*halakhah*), his writings emphasize the "hallowing of the everyday" and the personal (as opposed to abstract intellectual) encounter with God and other persons. There are no excerpts here from Buber's most famous work, *I and Thou*, but there are good, representative essays, including "Two Foci of the Jewish Soul," "Two Types of Faith," and "Church, State, Nation, Jewry."

Strangely, the section on Buber is presented before the section on Rosenzweig, presumably because Buber's birth precedes Rosenzweig's by eight years. But of course, Rosenzweig's writings come before Buber's, and had a formative influence on Buber's thought—particularly in the bias against a philosophical idealism that would deny the particular historical importance of the chosen people Israel (or the Christian church, for that matter).

Buber acknowledges an unresolvable difference between Christianity and Judaism in that Jews cannot see in Jesus the beginning of the Messianic era, maintaining instead an acute apprehension of "the unredeemedness of the world." It is impossible for the Jew to equate the Incarnation with the initiation of God's kingdom, since "universal history has not been rent to its foundations" and "the world has not yet been redeemed." Nevertheless, the spread of Christianity seems to Buber to be part of God's redemptive plan for bringing all peoples into the divine covenant. He argues for Christian acceptance of the religious legitimacy of Judaism as a mystery beyond normal philosophical and theological categories. Jews and Christians are united in serving God's single purpose, even as they are separated by fundamental contradictions, which Buber holds will ultimately be overcome. "We serve thus, till one day we may be united in common service, till we shall all become, as the Jewish prayer on the festival of the New Year puts it: 'a single fellowship for doing his will.' " And: "The gates of God are open to all. The Christian need not go via Judaism, nor the Jew via Christianity, in order to enter into God."

Will Herberg (1901-1977), a native-born American philosopher-theologian and sociologist, stands in the Rosenzweigian dual-covenant tradition—though in his view the Jews still have an important role *in* history, whereas Rosenzweig had declared the Jews to be a people largely *outside* of history. A disillusioned Communist, Herberg was inspired by the philosophical approach of religious existentialism, in particular by the Protestant neo-orthodox theology of Reinhold Niebuhr. Like Rosenzweig, Herberg nearly converted to Christianity but was dissuaded from such a move by Niebuhr himself, in order that he might truly become a Jew before he considered Christianity.

The two selections in this volume are must reading for anyone interested in interfaith relations. In "A Jew Looks at Jesus," Herberg, like Buber, seeks to place Jesus in his Jewish context. "Judaism and Christianity: Their Unity and Difference" is a little masterpiece that has been out of print for many years. It provides an astute and lucid identification of corresponding elements in the two faiths, such that no one can doubt the character of their special relationship (despite enduring and perhaps insurmountable differences). Herberg remained, throughout his life, distant from institutionalized Judaism and ritual practice, far more so even than Buber. Though Herberg never became a Christian, some Jews regard his thought as, in the end, more Christian than Jewish.

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ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL (1907-1972), unlike Will Herberg, was very much established within the Jewish community and its institutions, traditions, and practices. A conservative rabbi descended from a long line of rabbis and a professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, Heschel emerged as a major figure in the postwar flurry of ecumenical activity, playing a key role in negotiating on behalf of Jewish organizations with the Catholic hierarchy before and during the Second Vatican Council. His books—including *The Sabbath, Man's Quest for God, Man Is Not Alone, God in Search of Man*—were addressed to Jews but also won a large Christian readership. As John C. Merkle explains in his introductory essay, "To read Heschel is to feel the spiritual vitality and grandeur of Judaism; it is to be persuaded that the Jewish people are still covenanted to God and have an indispensable part to play in the divinely inspired drama of redemption."

In the articles reprinted here Heschel discusses the Jewish religious ideal of achieving both external conformity to moral law *and* inner appropriation of its spirit. Christianity, he thinks, often falls into an unbalanced emphasis on inner appropriation. Heschel welcomes the Christian recovery of Jewish roots in the Hebrew Scripture, warning against the recurring tendency to the heresy of Marcionism that denied Christianity's Jewish lineage. He is eager to praise all genuine Christian renewal—both for the sake of Christians, in that it brings them into the divine covenant (however different it is from God's covenant with Israel), and for the sake of Jews, who cannot help but be affected by the general spiritual climate of the culture.

In his moving essay "No Religion Is an Island," Heschel defends the uniqueness and special mission of the Jews as God's "chosen people" while at the same time acknowledging the benefit, even the providence, of religious diversity. The writings of Judah Halevi and Maimonides are cited as precedent for the idea that other religions, and Christianity in particular, are part of God's plan to prepare the world for the Messiah. It is possible, Heschel thinks, to overcome mutual contempt and establish mutual esteem and reverence. Such concord, however, can be achieved only by preserving and speaking from within distinct communities of faith. Heschel's motto, often quoted in ecumenical discussions, is that "interfaith dialogue must begin with faith."

Whatever may separate Jew and Christian, they are united against the creeping nihilism of modern culture and in their common hope for a redemption of the world. According to Heschel: "The supreme issue is today not the *halakhah* for the Jew or the Church for the Christian—but the premise underlying both religions, namely, whether there is a *pathos*, a divine reality concerned with the destiny of man which mysteriously impinges upon history; the supreme issue is whether we are alive or dead to the challenge and the expectation of the living God. The crisis engulfs all of us. The misery and fear of alienation from God make Jew and Christian cry together." In the pages of Fritz Rothschild's admirable anthology, one can hear that cry—and also the hope of overcoming alienation from God and one another.

BRIEFLY NOTED

THE EDGES OF SCIENCE: CROSSING THE BOUNDARY FROM PHYSICS TO METAPHYSICS. By RICHARD MORRIS. *Prentice Hall. 244 pp. $18.95.*

What was happening, if anything, before there was time? And what does "before" mean in that sentence? Are physicists and cosmologists on the edge of producing a "theory of everything"? Richard Morris is a science writer with a rare gift for making the arcane accessible to the nonspecialist. He is by no means inclined to sensation, as he constantly brings to the reader's attention the cautions of scientists who are far from happy with the tendency of contemporary physics to cross the line into metaphysics. But such crossings are being forced by the very advances of science that require new theories that go beyond what can be tested in laboratories. The result is that physics today is taking up questions previously addressed by philosophy, in a century when philosophy has, in many cases, radically pared down its ambitions, contenting itself with doing linguistic laundry. More comprehensive and less tendentious than Stephen Hawking's best-selling *A Brief History of Time*, the present book can be warmly recommended to non-scientists who want an update on what is happening on the other side of the boundary between the "two cultures" of contemporary intellectual life.

BONHOEFFER'S LEGACY: THE CHRISTIAN WAY IN A WORLD WITHOUT RELIGION. By EDWIN ROBERTSON. *Macmillan. 232 pp. $8.95 paper.*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Lutheran pastor executed by the Nazis in the last weeks of the war, surely has a lasting place as one of the great theological and spiritual figures of this century. His mature work represented in, for instance, his *Ethics* will, we expect, be read with appreciation by generations to come. For a time, especially in the 1960s, Bonhoeffer's legacy was almost torpedoed by a fashionable focus on his written fragments about the possibility of "religionless Christianity." That, some readers will recall, was the period of highly publicized discussions about "the death of God," or at least the death of what Christianity has usually meant by "God." *Bonhoeffer's Legacy* is very much a book of the 1960s, and it is somewhat surprising to see it show up three decades late for a discussion that is, deservedly, almost forgotten. Anyone who thinks, as Edwin Robertson does, that the century ahead poses the prospect of "a world without religion" either has an utterly singular insight into the nature of our times or is wonderfully indifferent to the massive evidence to the contrary. The present book provides

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slight support for the former possibility.

THE TYRANNIES OF VIRTUE: THE CULTURAL CRITICISM OF JOHN P. SISK. Edited by CHRIS ANDERSON. *University of Oklahoma Press. 264 pp. $24.95.*

Sisk, a frequent contributor to this journal, is surely one of the most gifted essayists writing today. Indeed, precisely as an *essayist* (and the term has most particular and rich significance for Sisk), there are not many who come to mind who are even in his league. His genius is to take an idea, an observation, an argument and turn it around and around, looking at it whole, while at the same time making the most unexpected connections that, once read and comprehended, were obviously crying out for notice. The present volume includes fifteen of Sisk's best, divided into the clusters of "Culture and Counterculture: Fanaticism in the Sixties and Seventies," "Deconstruction and Reconstruction: Fanaticism in the Eighties," and "Chaos and Character: The Ironies of Belief." The result is a feast of clear thinking in high style. The book is further enhanced by the admirable introduction by Chris Anderson, a former student of Sisk's who now teaches English at Oregon State University. The warmth of our recommendation of *The Tyrannies of Virtue* is tempered only by the fear that we may be suspected of getting a cut of the royalties.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH AND THE EAST GERMAN STATE: POLITICAL CHANGE AND CONFLICT UNDER ULBRICHT AND HONECKER. By ROBERT F. GOECKEL. *Cornell. 326 pp. $39.95.*

History being no respecter of publication schedules, it may seem that Mr. Goeckel's study has been overtaken by the Revolution of 1989. The author did manage to slip in a reference to the beginnings of that change at the end, but the gravamen of the book assumes a long and relatively stable future for the GDR. Nonetheless, the book will be valuable to both historians and students of church-state relations as an important case study in one effort to preserve some space for conscience against the voracious appetites of a totalitarian Caesar.

MODERNITY ON ENDLESS TRIAL. By LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI. *Chicago. 261 pp. $24.95.*

This Polish philosopher, perhaps most noted for his thorough critique of Marxist theory, is one of the finer minds of our time. In these essays written over the last fifteen years, Kolakowski addresses with great erudition and wit questions as various as the idolatry of politics, the relation between faith and reason, and the roots of revolutionary utopias. Throughout, he is concerned about the fate of religion, and especially of Christianity, in this "postmodern" world. Were we in the business of rating by stars, *Modernity on Endless Trial* would get four.

THE CONFESSIONAL MOSAIC: PRESBYTERIANS AND TWENTIETH-CENTURY THEOLOGY. Edited by MILTON J. COALTER, JOHN M. MULDER, and LOUIS B. WEEKS. *Westminster/John Knox Press. 333 pp. $14.95 paper.*

Very much conscious of the malaise of the mainline/oldline churches, the nine essays here explore whether the Presbyterian Church (USA) can be an active "presence," as distinct from merely "existing," in American life. Part of a major project funded by the Lilly Endowment, the book is a mix of sharp self-criticism and touching defensiveness. It should not be overlooked, however, by students of oldline Protestantism and its possible futures.

THE DIVINE GOOD: MORAL THEORY AND THE NECESSITY OF GOD. By FRANKLIN I. GAMWELL. *Harper Collins. 223 pp. $30.*

In every sense of the term, a thoroughly academic work that doggedly sets out the argument of the subtitle. Gamwell, who teaches religious ethics at the University of Chicago, focuses on Kant, Alasdair MacIntyre, and Karl-Otto Apel. Somewhat surprisingly, MacIntyre is seen as being engaged in an "empirical teleology" that is indifferent to the reality of God. *The Divine Good* will undoubtedly spark an argument or two among moral theorists.

REBUILDING THE NEST: A NEW COMMITMENT TO THE AMERICAN FAMILY. Edited by DAVID BLANKENHORN, STEVEN BAYME, and JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN. *Family Service America. 261 pp. $16.95 paper.*

Fifteen essays on the state of the American family and what might be done about it. While the writers are diverse in viewpoint, all share a strong appreciation of the importance of family and most are unafraid of being depicted as champions of "the traditional family." In addition to the editors, contributors include Urie Bronfenbrenner, Victor Fuchs, Gilbert Meilaender, and Robert Bellah.

WALKING TOGETHER: ROMAN CATHOLICS AND ECUMENISM 25 YEARS AFTER VATICAN II. Edited by THADDEUS HORGAN. *Eerdmans. 148 pp. $12.95 paper.*

The questions of Christian unity and the public face of religion are necessarily entangled. The essays in this little book offer a reliable overview of the impact of the Catholic Church's entry into the ecumenical project since the Council. Especially noteworthy are contributions by Avery Dulles, William Lazareth, and George Tavard.

THINKING THE UNTHINKABLE: MEANINGS OF THE HOLOCAUST. Edited by ROGER S. GOTTLIEB. *Paulist Press. 446 pp. $14.95 paper.*

The editor brings together some of the better-known reflections on the Holocaust. Among the reprinted are

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Robert J. Lifton, Jean-Paul Sartre, Abraham Heschel, Hannah Arendt, Gershom Scholem, and the now very controversial Bruno Bettelheim. What the editor makes of it all in his concluding essay, "Remembrance and Resistance," is that we should be "searching our hearts and our world for the Holocausts and illnesses in our own lives." And so forth.

CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION, THEOLOGY, AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM. By CHARLES E. CURRAN. *Notre Dame. 257 pp. $27.95.*

The celebrated "Curran case" at Catholic University kept Catholic academic guilds and journalists in an uproar for years. Curran, who has now found a resting place at Southern Methodist University, here tries to make retrospective sense of it all. His complaints about Vatican secrecy and frequent ineptitude are no doubt warranted in part. And nobody should doubt the sincerity of his intention to be a faithful Catholic theologian. At the same time, the present work ignores the ways in which Curran seemed to be deliberately provoking a confrontation with Catholic teaching authority. It also betrays a touchingly naive notion of "academic freedom" that, if it carried the day, would put higher education that is distinctively Catholic, or even distinctively Christian, out of business. That Curran's book is self-serving is perhaps excusable. That he seems to have learned so little from his ordeal—and the church's—is deeply disappointing.

AFTER PRINCIPLES. By GARRETT BARDEN. *Notre Dame. 160 pp. $19.95.*

"Modern ethical rhetoric is a rhetoric of reasons," writes the dean of University College, Cork, Ireland. It is a matter of giving reasons, and Barden contends that reasons can be elicited between people situated in quite different, and perhaps incommensurate, traditions. We are each in a tradition, but we are not exhausted by the traditions of which we are part. In this construal, moral reasoning is open-ended in a manner that might be described as eschatological. The essay is stylishly written and, except for a few sections that are unnecessarily technical, accessible to a general readership. The title obviously has Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* in mind, and Barden is indebted to what might be described as the MacIntyre tradition, although a good deal more hopeful than MacIntyre about the possibility of communicating between different traditions of moral reasoning.

RELIGION IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LIFE. By CLARKE E. COCHRAN. *Routledge & Kegan Paul. 226 pp. $49.50 cloth, $15.95 paper.*

The author, professor of political science at Texas Tech University, offers a broad overview of arguments about the place of religion in American public life. He very much shares the view of Stanley Hauerwas that religion must make its interventions, when it does intervene, from the borders of public life. He is therefore sympathetically critical (with the emphasis on critical) of what he takes to be the view of the Editor-in-Chief of this journal. Unfortunately, he mistakes that view to be one of advocating "civil religion," which places the emphasis upon the social utility rather than theological truth of belief. He notes that Neuhaus "avoids" the term civil religion, but Cochran appears to be unfamiliar with Neuhaus' extensive writings against precisely the position that is attributed to him here. It is very odd. Nonetheless, this is a generally sober and thoughtful essay that warrants the attention of those who have a more specialized interest in current discussions about religion in American life.

FOR THE COMMON GOOD: REDIRECTING THE ECONOMY TOWARD COMMUNITY, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE. By HERMAN E. DALY and JOHN B. COBB, JR. *Beacon Press. 482 pp. $12.95.*

The argument is as cumbersome as the subtitle. Daly, an economist in the environmental department of the World Bank, joins a leading proponent of "process theology" who would persuade us that sundry environmental crises imperil not only the future of man but also the future of "God." The contention that we should assert greater political control over economic behavior does not seem to have come to terms with the collapse of socialist schemes in recent years. In addition, the poor of the world who yearn to be incorporated into the circle of economic productivity will likely view with suspicion the notion that the world cannot sustain many more rich people.

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Richard John Neuhaus

The Public Square

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Boys and Girls: The Long Way Back to the Obvious

Surveys provide additional evidence that Americans are returning to "traditional values." Traditional values is usually a synonym for common sense or moral platitudes. Such sense is common and such morality is platitudinous because they are powerfully confirmed and reconfirmed by human experience over thousands of years. We now may be entering a new period of reconfirmation, notably in the realm of sexuality, and also among young people at college.

To be sure, college campuses sometimes look like the last holdout, increasingly turning themselves into enclaves of countercultural madnesses. It may be, however, that even some of the more bizarre developments on campus indicate that students, too, are returning to the morally obvious—although, to be sure, they are taking the very long way back. Consider, for example, the nationwide controversy over "date rape."

Here is a longish article in our most self-important local newspaper, reporting that students around the country are engaged in "a very public soul-searching unthinkable a generation ago. . . . Men and women are asking themselves and each other: When is sex considered sex, and when is sex considered rape?" The article is about very young men and very young women, otherwise known as boys and girls. And the question posed by the article is better understood as the difference between fornication (assumed to be OK) and rape (definitely bad). The current discussions about date rape that are lurching toward the self-evident were initiated, it is generally thought, by Susan Brownmiller's 1975 book, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape*. Ms. Brownmiller's polemic was hailed as yet another feminist broadside against "androcentric oppression" but, as we shall see, the debate that it sparked has thrown a number of feminist orthodoxies into severe question.

Date rape (also known as acquaintance rape) is when "sexual activity goes too far and becomes abhorrent to the woman." Some putative experts in "male studies" complain that that definition slights the situations in which sexual activity becomes abhorrent to the man, but, for very sensible reasons, that complaint is not being taken very seriously in the current discussion. The entire discussion of date rape is premised, with justice, upon an assumed inequality between male and female.

Jennifer Volchko of Lehigh University, an expert on date rape, says that "giving the problem a name has increased understanding and awareness of it." That makes sense. Presumably many boys, given the opportunity, have always tried to take sexual advantage of girls. One might speculate that the phenomenon has something to do with human nature, although, of course, talk about human nature is today banished from respectable academic discourse. What Ms. Volchko undoubtedly meant to say is that giving the phenomenon a "politically correct" name made it permissible to discuss it as a problem.

The thing under discussion has always had plenty of names: defilement, violation, debauchery, libertinism, wenching, and venery, for a few examples. None of those names would do, however, since they are associated with traditional moral discernments that are out of synch with contemporary orthodoxies about recreational sex. But now we have an ideologically acceptable name for the thing, date rape. This permits our experts to "discover" that boys in the heat of their libidinous prime frequently try to go as far as they can with girls. Science marches on.

A Readiness to Protest

Dr. Volchko explains that this generation of women

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was raised under the influence of the feminist movement and they are therefore more ready "to protest what is seen as men overstepping their bounds." But there is another part of that feminist movement that was set upon erasing the differences between men and women, especially with respect to sexual behavior. Women were determined to demonstrate that they were every bit as erotically aggressive and insatiable as men. That doctrine has been dropped in the debate over date rape.

In the present debate, we are back to traditional views of the male as rutting aggressor and the female as defender of decencies. Of course, more radical feminists have insisted for a long time that all heterosexual intercourse is equivalent to rape or prostitution. The college girls involved in the controversy at hand do not go that far. They appear prepared to "go along" with what boys so desperately want to do, but only after they have clearly given their permission. We are not quite back to the time when young women were advised to "Lie still and think of England," but maybe we're getting there.

At Brown University some coeds were so incensed about date rape that they went around writing on rest room walls (presumably women's rest rooms) the names of guilty boys. The fellows are not taking at all kindly to this. Some have protested that the women who now charge date rape did not say "no" at the time and did not physically resist. Others contend that the women encouraged their advances. According to the *Times*, "Women call that an after-the-fact excuse; sexual intercourse, they argue, should proceed from clear mutual consent." Preferably in writing, one gathers, and preferably at the beginning of the evening. Were that the practice, however, whatever else was scheduled for the evening (movie, rock concert, dinner, etc.) might seem like an insufferable postponement of what some young people would likely view as the main event.

The federal government has not neglected to finance research in this area. A study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health found that 7 percent of college girls "said they had experienced sexual assault in the previous twelve months." The admitted margin of error might make that 9 percent or 5 percent, but it is a lot of young women. The definition of "sexual assault" includes "intercourse by physical force, intercourse as a result of intentionally getting the woman intoxicated, or forcible oral or anal penetration." Terms such as "force" and "forcible" are subject to fine calibrations, it would seem, and presumably women are not to be held responsible for getting drunk. However shaky the findings, Americans will be glad to know that their tax dollars are at work in trying to figure out what boys will do in order to have sex with girls.

Equally gratifying is the fact that, according to this article, college administrators are also addressing the phenomenon. "One of the biggest reasons for date rape is the high level of consumption of alcohol on campus," we read. It is authoritatively reported that, when boys and girls are drunk, they are likely to do things that they would not do when sober. Another factor in date rape, it has been discovered, is "the introduction of dormitories shared by both sexes." One of the important things to know about this college generation, it seems, is that the proximity of nude or partially clothed members of the opposite sex in shared hallways, bathrooms, and bedrooms appears to increase the incidence and intensity of sexual arousal. Such arousal, in turn, frequently precipitates sexual suggestions and behavior. "Above all, assumptions about the roles of men and women seem to be shifting, with a resulting confusion on both sides about what is and is not acceptable behavior," the report continues. "It is clearly a perception issue," says Kim Gandy of the National Organization for Women, and it is hard to argue with that, whatever that means.

Remarkable Findings

In any event, federal and state funds are being made available for the establishment of "Sexual Assault Recovery Services" at universities across the country. At the same time, insurance companies are threatening to withdraw from the college market because of the rising incidence of claims related to date rape. Dr. Volchko thinks the rise of feminism has created a quite new situation. Date rape was not discussed in the old days, she says. "You didn't call it anything." The conventional thinking then, she said, was to say to the girl, "You put yourself in a vulnerable position and it's your own fault." Now, we are given to understand, it's the boy's fault.

The report continues, "College women, almost uniformly, complain about men assuming that certain behavior, like kissing or heavy petting, is an automatic precursor to intercourse. And they complain about the pervasiveness of these behavioral assumptions." In a family magazine such as this, we cannot detail what is meant by heavy petting, but we assume that a few readers, even those who are over thirty, have some familiarity with the practice. The new research, however, has determined that, with a surprising degree of frequency, young men who are in the heat of heavy petting become quite urgent about wanting, as it is commonly put, "to go all the way."

These are among the remarkable findings of the studies of the current college generation, underscoring the truth that "assumptions about the roles of men and women seem to be shifting." There is yet another disturbing discovery: "Women interviewed on several campuses said that when they talk about sex in their dormitory rooms there is a high level of distrust of men." Women who went to college in an earlier time will no doubt regret the loss

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of innocence, remembering how they assumed that boys could be trusted not to be sexually importunate.

Public Confessions and Mixed Signals

At Lehigh University, the report continues, they have what appear to be Maoist-style "self-criticism sessions." For instance, one sexually active (as they say) young man claimed that he had never raped a woman. Under pressure, however, he admitted that he had had sex with a girl when they were both drunk and she had struggled initially. "But they all do," he added. "It's the way it works," he told the official in charge of the session. Finally he broke down and admitted that he was "very confused" and had in fact raped "some" of the girls he dated. "I was uninformed and incorrect in my actions," he wrote in his confession that was published in the Lehigh student newspaper. The *Times* report does not say, but we would like to assume that he was then forgiven his deviance from correct opinion.

University administrators said that the behavior of young men "is reinforced by pressure from other men to 'score.' " This novel turn is reinforced by other expectations. For instance, the experts say, "many men assume that when a woman enters their bedroom in a dorm or a fraternity house, it is an unspoken invitation to sex." It used to be, we are invited to believe, that when a girl came into a boy's bedroom both understood that she only wanted to have a heart-to-heart talk. But now, it seems, these boys always have sex on their minds. "College-age kids nowadays have a different attitude toward sex," says Lawrence K. Pettit, chancellor of Southern Illinois University.

Girls and boys are missing signals. "At certain fraternity houses, when the girl goes upstairs, the guys start licking their chops," says Brett Finn, a junior at Lehigh. "There is a real miscommunication." At Lehigh, it seems, it used to be understood that girls go upstairs in fraternity houses for other reasons, like making sure the boys cleaned up their bedrooms.

Chancellor Pettit adds, "The kids regard sex almost as an entitlement, certainly as an expectation." But why shouldn't they? one might ask. They have repeatedly been told, not least in the schools, that regular genital exercise is a natural requisite of mental and psychic health. In these enlightened times it is understood that sex is recreational—good clean fun, demystified of the moral inhibitions of the past. The old notion that sex has consequences has been nullified by the pill and by abortion-as-contraception. In the new context, a girl's refusal to join in a refreshing little workout must seem irrational and downright unfriendly.

Date rape research has turned up other dynamics at work. For instance: "Many men have been conditioned to believe that initial refusals are an essential part of a 'mating game' ritual, one that dictates that women must resist somewhat to make themselves more attractive to men." Note that the boys have allegedly been "conditioned" to believe in mating rituals. Perhaps what is missing in the background of some journalists and sex researchers is, quite literally, a measure of familiarity with the birds and the bees. A person has to be conditioned *not* to understand that human beings, like all God's creatures, are programmed to engage in mating rituals involving male aggression and female submission. However, human beings, unlike other creatures, are not determined to follow the program. Over the millennia they have developed mores, taboos, and protective institutions aimed at inhibiting the male from doing what comes naturally.

Rape Unlimited

Rape is a mortal sin and odious crime. One of the unhappier aspects of the controversy over date rape is that, under ideological pressures, rape is trivialized. Rape, as currently discussed, does not have to involve physical assault in any way. Cornell's Andrea Parrot, who has pushed the idea that there is a date rape epidemic, claims that "any sexual intercourse without mutual desire is a form of rape." An article in *New York* magazine explains the logic: "In other words, a woman is being raped if she has sex when not in the mood, even if she fails to inform her partner of that fact." An expert in Columbia University's date-rape-education program declares, "Every time you have an act of intercourse, there must be explicit consent, and if there's no explicit consent, then it's rape. Stone silence throughout an entire physical encounter with someone is not explicit consent."

A training manual at Swarthmore College goes further: "acquaintance rape spans a spectrum of incidents and behaviors ranging from crimes legally defined as rape to verbal harassment and inappropriate innuendo." Little wonder, therefore, that Catherine Nye, a psychologist at the University of Chicago, found that 43 percent of the women in a widely cited rape study "had not realized they had been raped." Radical feminists insist that any sexual experience that involves confusion or ambivalence constitutes rape. If that is true, surely 100 percent of women who have had sexual intercourse have been raped, for it is difficult to imagine anyone "doing it," at least the first time, without a measure of confusion or ambivalence. Such bizarre reasoning can only result in voiding the horror of what sensible people mean by rape.

No Reason for Saying No

Nonetheless, the date rape debate can be welcomed in other respects. For all the ludicrous social scientific

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jargon in which it is wrapped, it is an instance of confused groping toward the reinvention of the wheel. Most welcome is the acknowledgment of fundamental and incorrigible differences between men and women when it comes to sexual behavior. In negotiating the shoals of erotic passion and practice, women are at a distinct disadvantage—obviously in physical strength but also in controlling the dynamics of the sexual encounter. Every culture known to us has recognized this reality and has therefore nurtured habits, expectations, and institutions designed to defend the woman against male aggressiveness. The odd thing about our cultural moment is that the women who so enthusiastically liberated themselves from those defenses now complain that they are defenseless.

One need only add that the biblically supported patterns of defense and restraint center in chastity, marriage, and respect for persons. It is said that these traditional ways of dealing with sexual behavior are "unrealistic" when so many young people think they are entitled to regular sex. That is much like saying that driving sober is unrealistic when so many young people think it is alright to drive drunk. Putting the focus on chastity, marriage, and self-restraint will not solve the "problem" of youthful sexuality. Nothing will do that. There will be, as there always have been, frequent deviations from approved behavior. For that there is social censure and, for the repentant, forgiveness. But there is surely nothing more unrealistic than the notion that autonomous, liberated boys and girls at the height of libidinous commotions are going to invent for themselves, starting from square one and maybe in a dormitory bedroom, a new sexual ethic.

The date rape debate is a poignant cry for the reestablishment of the idea of moral limits that many, notably feminists, recklessly abandoned in the name of self-actualization. At the end of the *Times* article, one of the experts quoted manages, once again, to get everything entirely backward. He is describing the rape education programs now being initiated in freshmen orientation sessions. The freshmen are told, he says, "Don't expect sex on every date. Ask a woman what she feels comfortable doing or not doing." It is embarrassing to have to instruct instructors on the simple fact that, so long as many young men think sex might be an option that night, they are going to do their darndest to get it. And to ask a girl what she is comfortable with at six o'clock may have little to do with twelve o'clock. Too many young men think it is their role to push the comfort level as far as they can, and then some.

Most important, the expert in question misses the point that his "education" puts the entire burden on the young woman to draw the line. What women are demanding in the debate over date rape is that some lines be drawn that are binding on everybody—lines that are defined not in terms of "comfort" but of right and wrong. Unless a young woman can say no because it is morally wrong, she has—in the moment of sexual encounter with a companion of her own choosing—no very convincing reason for saying no at all. It is little wonder that, over the last twenty years or so, many men were very supportive of women who practiced unilateral moral disarmament in the name of liberation. The date rape debate, although coming too late for many women, was inevitable. It is, whether those involved realize it or not, a return to basics in one of the most basic spheres of human behavior. But, oh, what a long, long way we are taking to get back to the obvious.

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THE RETURN OF PELAGIUS

Ancient heresies assume contemporary faces, according to Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The fourth-century Pelagius, for example, seems to be enjoying something of a comeback. Pelagianism teaches, *inter alia*, that man can on his own, without complete dependence on divine grace, achieve salvation. Pelagianism is popular not only because it panders to human pride but because Christians who are embarrassed by theological affirmations think its focus on ethics provides a bridge to the unbelieving modern mind.

Ratzinger: "The Pelagian error has many more followers today than it would seem at first glance. Even within the Church today there is this temptation, which is understandable in human terms, to find ways to get the message across where there is no faith and it is thought that the bridge between the faith of the Church and modern attitudes could be morality. Everyone can see more or less the need for morality and so the Church is proposed as a moral guarantee, as an institution of morality, while [theologians] do not have the courage to present the mystery. The mystery is not accessible, they think. Let us omit these obscure things and talk about comprehensible things, about morality. . . . This is what I mean about a Christian and Catholic temptation, the result of understandable but mistaken thinking, to reduce the Christian message to morality. In so doing, morality itself is being diminished."

According to Ratzinger, when religion is reduced to ethics and ethics is reduced to politics, the almost inevitable result is the "liberation theology" that looks very much like Pelagianism hitched to ideological utopianism, as, for instance, in Marxism. *30 DAYS*, an Italy-based magazine of increasingly

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quirky editorial direction, took a survey among bishops to find out who did and did not agree with Cardinal Ratzinger. The editors were not happy with the result, especially among Western bishops. "The opinions differed but all reflected general optimism, as if the worst of the storm had passed. But Ratzinger's comments address the present." It is to be feared, we are told, that the Cardinal's "prophetic" warnings "fell on deaf ears."

We are not sure about the magazine's survey results, but we are quite sure that Cardinal Ratzinger is right about Pelagianism. The error of Pelagius is perennial. It has always been, although usually unspoken, the dogmatic foundation of liberal optimism. In the period of neo-orthodoxy, continuing for some time after World War II, the likes of Barth, the brothers Niebuhr, Tillich, and Emil Brunner heaped piles of recondite scorn on the slogan that dominated a debased form of ecumenism, "Creeds Divide, Deeds Unite." Twenty-five years ago, one might have thought that the peddlers of such fatuities would be too embarrassed to ever again raise their heads. Not at all, as it turns out. The big difference now, as the Cardinal notes, is that many Roman Catholics have also embraced the gospel of optimistic moralism.

His point that reducing religion to morality also diminishes morality is critically important. We are sometimes distressed that readers mistakenly think that this journal is in that reduction business. "You are making an invaluable contribution," a Michigan subscriber writes, "in making it clear that all religions find their common cause in teaching the basic morality of right and wrong." That is surely well intended, but that is not what we are about as a journal. There are indeed profound moral commonalities between Christians, Jews, and nonbelievers—call it common grace, natural law, general revelation, or moral reason. But, for thoughtful Christians and Jews, those commonalities are informed by truth claims that transcend the moral—call it divine law and covenant, metaphysics, saving grace, ontology, or the way reality really is. "I don't know why you have to run articles on theology when the purpose of the journal is ethical," writes another reader. Ah well, we will just have to try harder. The career of Pelagius has flourished for 1,600 years, and there is no reason why we should expect it to end any time soon. The truth about the return of Pelagius is that he never went away.

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Not the End of Ecumenism

Trinity Press International is a new house in Philadelphia and they've been bringing out some worthy titles. For example, Gavin White's *How the Churches Got to be the Way They Are*. White is a church historian at the University of Glasgow and his ruminations range very widely. The present collection is composed of little essays on everything from the resurgence of fundamentalism to why Methodists behave as they do. It includes this on the ecumenical movement—a movement that he thinks came to a halt about fifteen years ago:

"The ecumenical movement was over. And the reason that it was over was that the theological stress on the importance of the church which came from the 1840s was no longer there. The cultural firestorm of the 1960s had centered on the rejection of institutions and of intermediate agencies between the observer and reality. That meant the church was no longer the chosen way to God but a barrier between us and God. It was now a positive virtue to ignore institutions, and to ignore the church. And yet there was a growth of fellowship between Christians which resulted, paradoxically, from exactly that factor which had scuttled ecumenism. If the church was now unimportant, it did not matter if Christians belonged to different churches, and they could all be happy together, Roman Catholics included, and indeed it was not long before they called this mutual happiness by the word 'ecumenism.' Going further, they even described it as true ecumenism and took great pleasure in pointing out that they did not believe in 'ecclesiastical joinery.' Against this, it might have been argued that the church was the work of a Carpenter in the first place, and those who followed him had a duty to use hammer and saw to make his work fit his will, but the climate was against such a reply."

The anti-institutional mood of the 1960s certainly played the role that White suggests. One might suggest, however, that behind that move was another: the decision that what *really* matters is social and political transformation. The political community replaced the ecclesial community as a center of attention. Indeed, the church was increasingly viewed in instrumental terms, as something to be *used* in order to advance "systemic change" in the social order. In any event, Gavin White, taking the long view, is not about to despair. "That one ecumenical movement was over did not mean that there would not be another, and perhaps another and another after that. Divisions in the church have always existed, and there have always been occasions when it has been necessary for somebody, somewhere, to leave and to set up a rival body. Yet in time the reasons for the divisions become less pressing, or are overcome by new developments, and it is possible to put back together the fragments of an earlier age. In some

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climates of opinion this is made easy and in others it is made difficult, but it can be done, and in church history it is always being done. Ecumenism is not over, though one particular movement may be."

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ABORTION RHETORIC, AGAIN

The newsletter, *Life Insight*, offers some suggestions to prolifers on how to respond to prochoice advocates. "*They Say:* Restricting abortion in this state will force women to travel to other states for abortions. *We Say:* That's like saying that gun control laws will force criminals to use knives. *They Say:* When parental notification laws result in children having children, everyone suffers. *We Say:* This is the pro-abortion theory of relativity. When a teenager has a baby, it's children having children. When a teenager gets an abortion, it's a young woman capable of making sound decisions. It's all relative. Just don't involve your relatives."

Of course a subject as momentous as abortion cannot be debated adequately with one liners. At the same time, and as much as we might lament it, political contests necessarily employ slogans and soundbites. The first exchange above touches on an interesting aspect of abortion rhetoric. The fact that legal protection for the unborn will make it more difficult to obtain abortions is often taken—even by people who claim not to have a firm position in the abortion debate—as a valid argument against protecting the unborn. In a similar vein, such people are impressed by the claim that, if abortion law is changed, the poor will not have the same chance as the rich to obtain an abortion. This is thought to be an ethical argument for justice. It is very odd.

If one believes that abortion is a great evil and the unjust taking of an innocent human life, then it is obviously not a good to which people should have easy and equal access. The rich can do many things—good, bad, and indifferent—that the poor cannot afford to do. Of course protecting the unborn will make it harder to get abortions. That's the point. Not so incidentally, it discourages people from doing a great wrong and encourages men and women to care for the children they conceive. Thus it all turns on what one thinks abortion is. Those who are impressed by the argument for ready or equal access to abortion have, in fact, declared themselves for the prochoice and against the prolife position. The crucial position, calling for direct decision, is the moral significance of abortion. Chatter about access and equality is, at least, an evasion of that decision, and, more likely, a way of disguising from ourselves that we have decided that abortion is morally indifferent, or even a positive good.

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AGAINST SKEPTICISM: KICKING STONES

In Boswell's *Life of Johnson* we find the notable instance in which the great Doctor refuted Bishop Berkeley's version of idealism. Coming out of church in Harwich, Boswell and Johnson were discussing the bishop's "ingenious sophistry to prove the nonexistence of matter." Boswell observed that, though the doctrine is not true, "it is impossible to refute." To this Johnson responded, "striking his foot with mighty force against a large stone, till he rebounded from it, 'I refute it thus.' " That is an argument drawn, as the Doctor's arguments were usually drawn, from what he called "the experience of mankind."

This well-known incident sets John Sisk off on one of his fifteen admirable essays included in *The Tyrannies of Virtue* (edited by Chris Anderson, University of Oklahoma Press). Sisk allows that neither Berkeley's theory nor Johnson's refutation would hold much water with contemporary philosophers. But then, a great many philosophers now follow such as Rorty and Derrida in contriving sophistries of radical skepticism not too dissimilar from Berkeley's. In response, says Sisk, we need something like Johnson's respect for "the experience of mankind."

"Perhaps this is why," Sisk writes, "after the philosophers have with their fanciful theories put in doubt the experience of mankind, we take such comfort from those moments in their biographies when they seem close kin to us after all: Derrida, for instance, being mistaken for a drug smuggler by Czechoslovakian authorities; Wittgenstein enjoying Betty Hutton and Carmen Miranda movies; Nietzsche persuading a friend to duel with him so that he could be honorably scarred; Kant on his daily walk insisting that a servant follow with an umbrella even on clear days; Sartre in old age reading detective stories and drinking too much; Bishop Berkeley believing that tar water would cure practically anything. With such intimations of untranscended mortality in mind we can even believe that the philosophers sometimes find us as hard to refute as we find them. How often, knowing in their hearts what jerry-built structures our epistemologies are, must they, like Dr. Johnson, be content to

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counterargue with a frustrated kick at the nearest stone?"

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While We're At It

■ We ran in February a rather upbeat report by Dave Andrusko on the 1990 election and the prolife cause. Lest folk of that persuasion become too upbeat, listen in on another interpretation. This is Ann F. Lewis, Democratic political consultant, writing in *Congress Monthly*, the publication of the American Jewish Congress: "In sum: At the beginning of this past election season, the imminent threat to abortion rights propelled the issue to the forefront of public concerns. By the time voters went to the polls, the issue was one of several competing for attention, including the prospects of a national recession and spreading fear of conflict. The continued increase in prochoice victories even at this time demonstrates that support for abortion rights is not just a short-lived phenomenon. It is deeply rooted in the expectations and aspirations of American society—and it is especially important to several groups of voters who are important to us: young voters, women, and Jews."

■ An acquaintance says that almost all his friends are conservatives, his closer friends are right wingers, but his very best friends are real wingers. A while back we commented in this space on a mailing from a real winger outfit that was raising alarums about the influence of sundry conspiracies, including the Bilderbergers. Who on earth are the Bilderbergers? we asked. A reader whose uncle sends him real wing literature has come to our help. It seems the Bilderberg group meets very secretly each year on the island of La Toja, off the Atlantic coast of Spain, bringing together the top financial, corporate, and political leadership that, along with the Trilateral Commission, really runs the world. According to the clipping we were sent, their most recent coup was removing Margaret Thatcher from power. So now, while reading the daily newspapers, we expect many of our readers will have occasion to say from time to time, "Aha, the Bilderbergers at work again!"

■ CAFE is not what it might sound like. Christianity and the Future of Europe is a British-based association trying to bring together church leadership to chart a more promising course for Christianity in the European worlds following the Revolution of 1989. CAFE publishes a semi-annual newsletter that may be of interest to some readers. Write Dean John Nurser, 11 Minster Yard, Lincoln LN2 1PJ, United Kingdom.

■ Fidel Castro recently told the Communist Youth Union that he would continue fighting alone for his "socialist revolution," and would do so "even if 98 percent of the Cuban people did not believe in it." You cannot accuse him of pandering to popular opinion. The other day we walked by the Revolution Bookstore on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. It was bedecked with a newly painted banner: "MAO MORE THAN EVER!! The End of One Stage, the Beginning of Another." We are obliged to report that the store seemed to be doing a lively business. As Irving Howe, albeit a more sober man of the left, put it: "Socialism is the name of our dream."

■ The World Health Organization says that in 1989 in the Republic of Ireland there were 1.3 diagnosed cases of AIDS reported for every 100,000 people. That compares with 13.3 per 100,000 in the United States. That is a difference of one thousand percent. Sheila Rule of the *Times* gets a full thirty-two column inches to explain why the Catholic Church's opposition to "safe sex" (condoms) for homosexuals and free needles for drug addicts is the major obstacle to coping with AIDS in Ireland. "Campaigners against AIDS say that to prevent the disease from taking a grim toll, the Irish must challenge the church and other symbols of authority," writes Ms. Rule. She leaves little doubt that she agrees. That approach has worked marvelously well in the United States. By ridding itself of traditional morality, Ireland, too, might be able to increase the incidence of AIDS by a thousand percent. As to the prospect that the Irish will follow our example, *Fors fortis*, as the bishop said.

■ "Mean for Jesus" is the title of an article on Senator Jesse Helms that recently appeared in *Vanity Fair*. Writing in response, psychoanalyst Thomas Ferraro had this to say: "Peter J. Boyer accurately portrayed the aggressive power of Senator Jesse Helms and the frightening passivity of Senator Claiborne Pell. As a psychoanalyst, I would say that Helms is an example of someone who denies most natural and pleasurable aspects of life. This denial eventually turns into intense aggression. Pell is a good example of a person not nearly so repressed, who, as a result, uses much of his energy in the pursuit of pleasure and life enhancement, including projects in the arts and sciences. Given a face-to-face confrontation between two such people, the repressed one will always win. This accounts for why so many conservative businessmen are winners in terms of monetary pursuits." It no doubt accounts as well for psychoanalysts being so free of prejudice.

■ Andrew Sullivan of *The New Republic* notes that a number of magazines are going belly up, including *Wigwag*, which in its final issue carried a reminiscence of an owling expedition in Mississippi. It also included the results of a reader survey. "Sixty-nine percent of *Wigwaggers* picked themselves as the

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person the world could least afford to do without, followed by Mikhail Gorbachev (21 percent) and Mother Teresa (7 percent). Jesus mustered 1 percent. The front-runner choice for president in 1992 was Jimmy Carter. More scarily, half the readers confessed to a short, private fantasy of killing someone." Mr. Sullivan is not quite sure what all this means, but he notes that "the country should doubtless soon brace itself for a platoon of self-obsessed peacenik atheists, hell-bent on whimsically murdering disabled owls. Unless, of course, *The New Yorker* can take up the slack."

■ Many sound reasons have been offered why the distribution of condoms in high schools will not reduce the incidence of AIDS and may well increase it by encouraging promiscuity. Nonetheless, such distribution has been energetically promoted in New York City, notably by ACT-UP and other more radical homosexual activist groups, backed by the Mayor. The *New York Times* also supported the policy. The day before it was approved, the *Times* editorially declared, "The Board of Education has a choice: whether to be swayed by those who mind our children's health or those who would mind their morals. May it cast its vote for health—and life." As Deuteronomy 30 does *not* say: "I set before you this day health and morality; choose health, that you and your descendents may live."

■ As almost everybody knows, answers in survey research must be checked with the questions asked. The Harris Poll reports that only 20 percent of respondents have a "great deal" of confidence in the "people in charge of running organized religion." Yet the Gallup Poll has over the years reported that confidence in "the church or organized religion" is higher than confidence in any other major institution (although the last time around, religion was edged out by the military). So who's right? "Both questions are equally valid," says Gallup, "and their comparison yields insight to how the public may distinguish between institutions and their leadership." The dramatic gap between confidence in religious institutions and confidence in their leaderships should perhaps come as no surprise.

■ "Young Pilgrims in Switzerland" (*Les Jeunes Pelerins en Suisse*) is a Christian summer program for children from 8 to 12. Michael Aeschliman, a frequent contributor to this journal, is one of the program leaders, and you can find out more about it by writing P.O. Box 236, Free Union, VA 22940 (804-973-7960)

■ The Institute on Religion and Public Life is very pleased that Midge Decter has joined us as a Distinguished Fellow. Extremely pleased, in fact. Ms. Decter is a noted writer and social critic and, most recently, director of the Committee for the Free World. (Shattering the rules of the sociology of institutions, the Committee went out of business when it had achieved its purpose—its purpose being to vindicate democracy in the struggle against Communism.) Ms. Decter's responsibilities with the Institute include her own writing (also for this journal!), editorial counsel, and coordinating projects that advance the sane and vibrant interaction of religion and public life. Readers who know Midge Decter will understand, and those who don't will soon come to understand, why we are so grateful for her company in the enterprise of the Institute and of FIRST THINGS.

Sources: On boys and girls and date rape, the *New York Times* January 2, 1991 and *New York* magazine, January 21, 1991. On Pelagianism, *30 DAYS*, December 1990. On abortion rhetoric, *Life Insight*, Vol. 1, No. 4. Ann Lewis quoted in *Congress Monthly*, February 1991. Castro quoted in *Update on Cuba*, December 1, 1990. Sheila Rule on AIDS in the *New York Times*, January 6, 1991. Psychoanalyst Thomas Ferraro quoted in *Vanity Fair*, December 1990. Andrew Sullivan on the demise of *Wigwag* in *The New Republic*, March 11, 1991. On condoms for New York City school children, the *New York Times*, February 26, 1991. Poll data on confidence in organized religion from Princeton Religion Research Center, January 1991.

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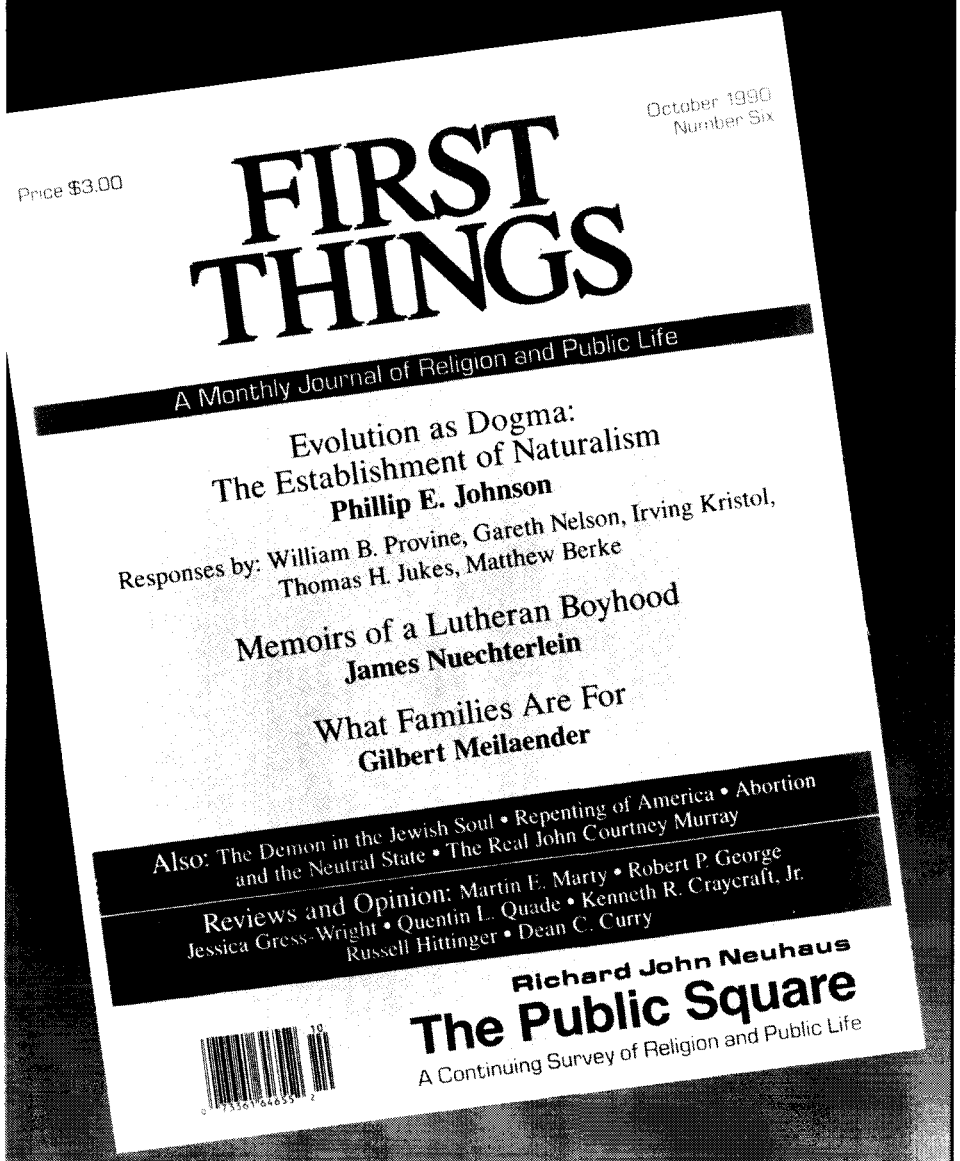
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